

Turkey strikes at Kurds in Iraq

ANKARA (AP) — Turkish newspapers reported Wednesday that Turkey has launched its latest offensive into northern Iraq against Iraqi Kurds. Defence Minister Mehmet Cihan said he could neither deny nor confirm the reports. The reports came after the Turkish Kurdish rebels launched hit-and-run attacks over the past week on at least 20 Iraqi Kurdish positions near the Turkish border. Safen Dizayhe, the Ankara spokesman for the Kurdistan Democratic Party, an Iraqi Kurdish group, told the Associated Press that the rebels had attacked one of its checkpoints near the town of Amadiyah on Tuesday. He said there were no casualties. Abdullah Ocalan, the leader of the Turkish Kurdish rebels, said in a statement this week that they were trying to wreck a U.S.-sponsored truce reached earlier this month between rival Iraqi Kurdish groups, the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan. The two parties had been engaged in fighting for control of the area for 14 months.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية، الرأى

Jordan calls for Palestinian unity

AMMAN (Petra) — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Al Kabariti on Wednesday voiced Jordan's support of the Palestine National Authority (PNA). In a meeting with the head of the Palestine Liberation Organisation's (PLO) Political Department, Farouk Al Kaddoumi, Mr. Kabariti stressed the need for unifying Palestinian political stands in backing Palestinian negotiators. Mr. Kaddoumi underlined the need to safeguard the PLO's unity in order to achieve Palestinian national goals and establish an independent Palestinian state. Mr. Kaddoumi arrived here on Monday and was scheduled to leave for Damascus to meet with leaders of Palestinian dissident groups and Syrian government officials. On Tuesday Mr. Kaddoumi met here with fellow-members from the PLO Executive Committee.

Volume 19 Number 6008

AMMAN THURSDAY, AUGUST 31, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1995, RABI' ALTHANI 5-6, 1416

Price: Jordan 150 Fils

NATO, U.N. punish Serbs for massacre

Planes repeatedly pound Serb positions; rapid reaction force opens up heavy guns

Combined agency dispatches

DOZENS OF warplanes from North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) countries unleashed bombs on Serb targets around Sarajevo Wednesday in the biggest assault in the alliance's history. Bosnian and Western leaders hoped the open-ended strike would finally force the rebels to make peace.

A French Mirage 2000C fighter was shot down by Serb air defences near the Serb stronghold of Pale, a U.S. administration official in Washington said. Two red parachutes were observed in the air after the plane was hit, and the official said the two airmen apparently had survived.

When Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic heard that a plane had been downed, he leaped out of the window of the Pale TV building and shouted, "Find the pilots."

The United States has

search crews in the area, but it was not clear whether they were headed towards Pale to try to retrieve the French airmen. No other information was immediately available on the first reported allied loss.

The NATO assault, backed by the heavy guns of the U.N. rapid reaction force, was in retaliation for a Serb mortar attack on a Sarajevo market that killed 37 people Monday. NATO chief Willy Claes said the offensive would continue and possibly grow more severe until the Serbs are brought to heel.

Mr. Karadzic, who was thought to be in Belgrade, called the NATO strikes "a moral disaster for the Western world and for the U.N." because it had taken side in a civil war.

He indicated he might pull out of the latest U.S. peace initiative. "I think those bombs can destroy the peace process, too," Mr. Karadzic said.

Five European Union

(EU) observers, plus their driver and interpreter, were believed killed Wednesday.

The spokesman for the European Community monitoring mission based in Montenegro refused to say where the numbers of the mission were killed or give the circumstances of their deaths.

Bosnian Serb radio said they were killed in Pale in a vehicle accident attributed to the NATO airstrikes.

The EU identified the dead as senior Spanish diplomat and mission chief Fernando Sanchez Ran, his assistant Jose Luis Esponera, and Luis Zenon Quintana, both from Spain; James Fitzgibbon of Britain; and Pieter Schoonenwolf of the Netherlands.

First reports had said an Irishman had been among the delegation.

Interpreter Olga Meden and driver Aleksandar Rastovic, both from Montenegro, were also killed.

The United Nations meanwhile demanded that the

Bosnian Serbs withdraw all their heavy weapons from the 20-kilometre exclusion zone around Sarajevo.

"The force commander has demanded that General (Ratko) Mladic withdraw all his heavy weapons from the 20-kilometre exclusion zone around Sarajevo, accept a cessation of hostilities and desist from all threats of attack against any of the remaining United Nations proclaimed safe areas," U.S. Secretary General Boutros Ghali said in a written statement.

Mr. Ghali called for an end to the violence in Bosnia saying that "the tragic cycle of killing, which culminated in Monday's deadly attack on Sarajevo by the Bosnian Serbs, must stop."

More than 60 aircraft from several NATO countries flew from bases in Italy and the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt to carry out Wednesday's attack.

(Continued on page 7)



British soldiers of the rapid reaction force in Bosnia-Herzegovina fire a 105-millimetre gun from their position on Mount Igman on Wednesday against Serb bases (AFP photo)

King, Sultan Qaboos discuss Arab developments, peace and Bosnia

SALALAH, Oman (Agencies) — Jordan and Oman on Wednesday opened high-level talks co-chaired by His Majesty King Hussein and Sultan Qaboos Bin Sa'id on the situation in the Arab region and inter-Arab relations.

The two sides dwelt on the Middle East peace process, bilateral relations and the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Sultan Qaboos expressed Oman's support of Jordan's role in the peace process and of all tracks of Arab-Israeli negotiations. Peace will bring the region into a new era characterised by security and stability and which would enable the peoples of the region to exploit their potentials in the best possible manner, Sultan Qaboos said.

The two sides also dwelt on the deteriorating situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina and underlined the need to end the suffering of the Bosnian people and reach a settlement of the conflict in a manner that would preserve its rights as part of a comprehensive solution in former Yugoslavia sponsored by the international community.

The two sides also reviewed bilateral ties and means of enhancing them in transport, commerce and agriculture.

The Omani side at the talks voiced the Sultanate's backing for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) summit, which will be hosted by the Kingdom in October and confirmed Oman's participation in the summit.

The talks were attended on the Jordanian side by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem. On the Omani side the talks were attended by Deputy Prime Minister for Financial and Economic Affairs Abdul Mun'em Al Zawawi, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Yousef Ben Alawi and Transport Minister Abdullah Al Ghazali.

Also on Wednesday, King Hussein and the delegation were accompanied by Sultan Qaboos on a tour of Salalah.

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Alawi at his residence in the Omani city in the presence of Mr. Qasem.

The prime minister and the Omani official discussed Jordanian-Omani relations and means of enhancing them.

It is the first visit by King Hussein abroad and to an Arab country after the recent defection of a high-ranking Iraqi official to Jordan and his decision to grant the defector asylum in the Kingdom.

The discussions between the King and Sultan Qaboos, who maintained

traditionally strong relations despite the strain in ties between Amman and Gulf states over the 1990-91 Gulf crisis, were expected to have focused on the regional situation after the Aug. 8 defection.

The Sultanate of Oman has not formally commented on the defection of Hussein Kamal Hassan, former Iraqi minister of industry, his brother Saddam Kamel and their wives, both daughters of President Saddam Hussein, who have been given asylum in Jordan.

Also expected to have figured high in the Salalah meeting was the outcome of Jordan's efforts to settle inter-Arab differences and heal the wounds left behind by the Gulf crisis.

Oman, which enjoys wide respect for its moderate policies, had played a key role in trying to settle the differences between Jordan and some of Oman's fellow members in the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Kuwait.

Iraq, Kuwait extend talks

KUWAIT CITY (Agencies) — Kuwait and Iraq on Wednesday extended their talks on the fate of 605 people reported missing in Kuwait under the 1990-1991 occupation, a Kuwaiti official said.

The two sides had expected to finish the talks on their border around 5 p.m. (1400 GMT) but agreed to meet for several more hours, an official with Kuwait's committee on the missing and prisoners of war said.

"I think the talks are good. I think there are new ideas," he said, although he had no details about the discussions which began around 9 a.m. (0600 GMT).

Vesselin Kostov, a spokesman for the U.N. observer force whose offices were used for the meeting in the demilitarised zone (DMZ), said the talks had also been extended on the first day, Tuesday.

"This is evident that serious talks are going on," he said.

But Mr. Kostov could provide no details about the actual talks because his U.N. Iraq Kuwait Observer Mission (UNIKOM) is tasked only with providing office space, transportation and security for the delegates.

Mr. Kostov said UNIKOM had been approached about hosting more talks on the prisoners next month on the Iraqi side of the demilitarised zone, but added this had not, officially been confirmed.

The delegates, including those from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) which is sponsoring the meeting, have kept a blanket of secrecy over the meeting.

Kuwaiti delegate Duajj Ala Anzi said Monday that Iraq had appeared to be more forthcoming on the issue of admitting this month in Geneva that it had transferred a total of 116 prisoners to Iraq during the 1990-1991 occupation.

But the official Iraqi News Agency (INA) denied Tuesday it admitted to the cases of 116 people.

Kuwait says 605 people, including 550 Kuwaitis and eight women, were arrested

(Continued on page 7)

Jordan is not plotting to oust Saddam -- Kabariti

'Amman and Cairo may differ on views, but relationship is healthy'

CAIRO (Agencies) — Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said in published comments Wednesday that Jordan had no part in any plot to overthrow Iraqi President Saddam Hussein despite harbouring his dissident son-in-law.

Mr. Kabariti was quoted as saying the Iraqi defectors who fled earlier this month were not granted political asylum, and that trade ties with Iraq would not be cut. "What Lieutenant-General Hussein Kamel Hassan says about the situation in Iraq and the need for change and plotting to overthrow (the regime) concerns Lt. Gen. Hassan personally," Mr. Kabariti said in an interview with Egypt's Al Ahram newspaper.

"It is true that Gen. Hassan expressed his opinion about this situation on Jordanian territory, but we are not involved in any plot to overthrow the regime in Iraq at this moment," he said.

Gen. Hassan, his brother and their wives, both daughters of President Saddam,

arrived in Amman on Aug. 8. Gen. Hassan said he planned to overthrow President Saddam and was in contact with Iraqi opposition groups.

Mr. Kabariti said: "Official relations have been affected, but trade relations are natural until now."

"There is a clear Jordanian political will not to close the borders and not to stop trade cooperation with Iraq and not to... stop Jordan from being the lungs and outlet for Iraq to reduce the suffering of the Iraqi people," he said.

The minister also told Al Ahram he did not think Iraqi troops would attack Jordan for sheltering Gen. Hassan. He stressed that Gen. Hassan was given protection, but not political asylum.

Mr. Kabariti admitted to differences between Amman and Cairo over Iraq.

"It is possible that tensions exist and that these tensions show up in statements which are unsatisfactory for both sides," Mr. Kabariti told Al Ahram.

"But that shows we have a healthy relationship," he said, adding that Jordan "hopes that the solid relations will help overcome any tension."

"Egyptian-Jordanian contacts will continue and coordination will be strengthened. For us it is a strategic option," Mr. Kabariti said.

"In any case, we admit Egypt has a leadership position" in the Arab World, he said.

Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak criticised a speech on Aug. 23 by King Hussein in which the monarch criticised Iraqi policies.

Mr. Mubarak suggested that the King had "political aims" behind the speech and dismissed statements made by Gen. Hassan that Iraq planned to invade Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

He also chided others outside Iraq who have called for the overthrow of President Saddam, saying President Saddam's fall was an "internal matter."

Israel lifts Jericho siege; PNA continues arrests

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Israel lifted the closure on autonomous Jericho in the West Bank on Wednesday imposed after last week's suicide bombing that killed five people, the army said.

Hundreds of Palestinians left the self-rule enclave early in the morning for work in Israel, witnesses said.

Security sources had said Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin decided on the closure last Wednesday to pressure the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to hand over two members of the militant Hamas group which Israel said helped plan the Jerusalem bus bombing on Aug. 21.

Palestinian officials refused to surrender the two but jailed them in Jericho for "security offences."

Since then, both Israel and the PLO have cracked down on Hamas, which spearheads opposition to Israel-PLO peace moves.

Hamas and Islamic Jihad, another militant group, have killed more than 80 Israelis and tourists in suicide attacks since the landmark 1993 Israel-PLO peace deal that launched Palestinian self-rule in Gaza and Jericho.

Israel arrested dozens of Hamas militants and killed two in a shootout on Friday. Security officials said suicide bombings were thwarted.

Palestinian security officials said they arrested more than 30 militants in Gaza on Tuesday including a guerrilla who was on his way to carrying out a suicide attack in Jerusalem.

Israeli security sources said Palestinian troops had made the arrests while searching for Yahya Ayyash, dubbed "the Engineer," a Hamas militant thought to have planned many of the suicide attacks against Israel.

Israel and the PLO are in the final stages of negotiations on the long overdue expansion of Palestinian self-

rule in the West Bank.

Israeli police arrested seven settlers on Wednesday in connection with revenge attacks on Palestinians from a neighbouring West Bank village, officers said.

Two policemen were lightly injured by stones thrown by other settlers as they raided Yizhar colony, a stronghold of Jewish extremists just south of Nablus, at dawn.

Four settlers are accused of attacking Palestinians from nearby Burin village and planning to set fire to the village school and clinic in revenge for Arab stone-throwing at their cars.

Police detained three others when they tried to block the arrests.

Yizhar's rabbi, David Dudkevitch, said police would not reveal their identity and settlers feared they were Palestinian militants.

He condemned the "violence committed by the

(Continued on page 7)

U.S. 'warns Syria over hardline groups'

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The United States has notified Syria that it holds the Damascus regime responsible for proliferating threats from Palestinian groups against U.S. citizens, the Washington Post reported on Wednesday.

The newspaper said Secretary of State Warren Christopher instructed the U.S. ambassador in Syria in a cable dated Aug. 11 to tell the Syrians "at the highest appropriate level" that "these threats are unacceptable."

It said the language Christopher was told to use is unusually blunt, reflecting what U.S. officials said was an indication of the administration's concern.

Mr. Christopher's cable made clear Washington was angry at Syria for continuing to harbour members of Hamas, Hizbollah and other groups, whose threats have led to a tightening of security at U.S. airports in recent weeks.

In the cable, Mr. Christopher tells Mr. Ross to tell Syrian officials that "it is particularly disturbing that

Regent urges collective effort to ensure MENA summit success

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Wednesday addressed a meeting of representatives of various industrial, commercial and professional sectors taking part in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit to be held here in October, calling for interaction and harmony among these sectors to enable the conference achieve success.

The MENA seminar represents the right response to Jordan's calls on the countries of the region to work together in drawing up plans and policies that will guarantee development and progress for the whole region, said the Regent at the meeting held at Basman Palace.

Addressing his audience, who also included Cabinet members whose departments are directly involved in the MENA summit, the Regent stressed that the Jordanian projects to be submitted to the conference should be well-planned and clear because the coming conference is regional in nature, offering good chance for discussing regional as well as Jordanian development.

The Regent reviewed the various stages of the Jordanian economic development over the past decades, recalling that in the 1980s and



1970s Jordan was struggling to draw up policies and build institutions. He noted that the present phase of development — which ends by the year 2005 — will serve as a stage for building a modern state, a state of institutions and the rule of law.

Noting that in the past decades Jordan was overburdened with forced migrations, the last of which was the return of hundreds of thousands of expatriates from the Gulf region, Prince Hassan said that these burdens had obstructed the Kingdom's struggle to achieve progress.

Furthermore, he said the billions of dollars spent on

Wars in the region by far exceed the funds that were allocated for infrastructure and development projects.

Referring to Jordanians' funds deposited abroad, he said that some estimates put them at around \$5 billion. He called on the private and public sectors to work together and find a way in which part of these funds to be invested in Jordan.

He said that the committee preparing for the MENA meeting should define priorities and work towards transferring capital to the region for investment in development projects that can ensure prosperity for future generations.

Also addressing the meeting was Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb, who chairs the committee preparing for the MENA conference. He outlined the work of the committee and sub-committees, which, he said, handle their task in close cooperation with each other.

The committee's rapporteur, Planning Ministry Secretary-General Nabil Ammari, also addressed the meeting outlining the aims and objectives of the conference and underlining the importance of cooperation between the public and private sectors to ensure the success of the conference.

(Continued on page 7)

Women say PNA tried to muzzle them in Beijing

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — Members of Yasser Arafat's government and Islamic leaders tried to muzzle Palestinian delegates before they left for the U.N. women's conference in Beijing, women activists said.

Mr. Arafat's Palestinian National Authority (PNA) told the women to focus on their suffering under Israeli military rule, and play down issues such as Palestinian domestic violence and the unequal treatment of women under local laws, said delegates Merwat Rishmawi.

"The authority tried indirectly to tell us that we should concentrate on violence of the occupation and not the social violence, not to display our dirty laundry," said Ms. Rishmawi, a researcher in the West Bank human rights group Al Haq.

A Muslim clergyman in Jerusalem, meanwhile, demanded the women stay away from discussions in Beijing on extramarital sex, homosexuality and abortion, practices banned by Islam.

"We are a conservative society that controls the freedom of individuals," Mufti Ikrama Sabri told The Associated Press on Tuesday.

Sheikh Sabri, who was appointed by Yasser Arafat and has the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) chief's backing, said his ruling on the women's conference was faxed to Beijing by Mr. Arafat's office as the official Palestinian position.

Diab Ayoush, Palestinian deputy welfare minister, acknowledged Tuesday that he tried to give the women delegates "guidance" before they left for Beijing on Tuesday.

The Palestinians sent two delegations, a 15-member official group headed by Welfare Minister Intissar Wazir, and 40 women representing private groups.

Mr. Ayoush said he reminded the women that they represented a predominantly Muslim society. He said Islamic law ruled clearly on many issues affecting women, such as inheritance and polygamy and that the women should take the Islamic stance in Beijing.

"Our instructions were not orders. Many women understood our positions and some opposed them just because they are the opinions of men," Mr. Ayoush said.

Many delegates said they resented the interference.

"We reject such dictates," said Rawda Basir, who works with handicapped adults in the West Bank town of Nablus. "We don't want to represent the line of the political leadership."

Ms. Basir said the law provided little protection to Palestinian women. She said Mr. Arafat's government has dismissed women's demands for changes, arguing that the autonomy accord with Israel did not give the PLO the authority yet to pass new legislation.

Ms. Basir said Mr. Arafat's government has performed poorly in areas under its control, such as the appointment for women to positions of power. She noted that only one woman, Welfare Minister Wazir, sat in Mr. Arafat's cabinet and that only two director-generals in ministries were women.

"Women work as secretaries, not decision makers," she said.

Mr. Ayoush dismissed the complaints, saying the first objective of the Palestinians was to obtain statehood. "We have more serious concerns than talking about equality," he said.

It is part of a wider effort to include meetings in other regions — that eventually is expected to produce a U.N. document meant to help children throughout the world trapped in war.

The Cairo meeting, organised by the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), sought the views of 21 children — Sudanese, Yemenis, Egyptians and Palestinians.

Over 100 million Arab children have been orphaned, lost a limb, lost their homes or been devastated in other ways by conflict since World War II, said Sarojini Vithachi, UNICEF's regional director.

At least half of the 21 Arab



AFGHAN WAR: Surrounded by smoke from an incoming artillery shell explosion, an Afghan government soldier abandons his armoured BMP vehicle after rival faction gunners bombed his position in Sarobi, 70 kilometres east of Kabul (AFP photo)

Italian Catholic group turns to peacemaking

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AP) — As Israelis and Palestinians heightened their dispute over Jerusalem Tuesday, an Italian Catholic group tried to bring them closer together by convening Jewish, Muslim and Christian clergy to talk peace.

"Jerusalem, as distinct from other holy cities of the world, does not belong exclusively to one religion," Andrea Riccardi, head of the Rome-based St. Egidio Group, told 200 clergy and other participants.

The group of 15,000 mostly Italian members mediated between warring parties in Mozambique for two years until a 1992 peace agreement. Last year, it tried to foster peace in Algeria.

The Jerusalem campaign also appeared to face an uphill battle — with Jewish and Arab delegates each stressing their own side's attachment to the city Tuesday.

The conference comes a

day after Israel's government delivered closure orders to three Palestinian offices as part of a campaign to assert its "sovereignty" in East Jerusalem.

Israel claims the three offices — a broadcasting company and health and statistics offices — are being run by the Palestinian National Authority in violation of the Israel-Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) accords limiting official Palestinian activity to Gaza and Jericho. The office directors plan to ignore the order to shut down by Friday.

On Tuesday, the right-wing Israeli mayor, Ehud Olmert, also demanded foreign officials stop visiting the PLO's Jerusalem headquarters, the Orient House, saying it was an "insult" to send official delegations in defiance of Israel's wishes.

Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, the senior Vatican repre-

sentative at the conference, urged the sides to somehow share the city.

"Everyone can claim Jerusalem, but none can claim it to the exclusion of others," he said. "Jerusalem must, in the peace that has been found again, become the place of the most fraternal understanding between all sons of Abraham."

Rabbi Mordechai Piron, formerly chief rabbi of the Israeli army of the Jewish community of Zurich, Switzerland, spoke of the ancient and continuing Jewish attachment to the city.

Muslim representative Abdul Salam Abu Shukhaidem said Islam speaks of peace in Jerusalem, but added that this vision requires Muslim control over the eastern sector.

"There is no peace without justice and we cannot live without East Jerusalem belonging to the Muslims," said

Sheikh Abu Shukhaidem, who represented the Islamic trust, or Waqf, which administers Muslim holy sites in Jerusalem and the West Bank.

Sheikh Abu Shukhaidem replaced at the last minute Mufti Sabri. Sheikh Sabri declined to comment on the reasons for his absence.

Israeli chief Rabbi Yisrael Lau was also absent.

St. Egidio was started in the late 1960s by a group of Italian students in Rome who wanted to serve the poor in the spirit of the gospel. They operated homeless shelters and food kitchens for 20 years before turning to international dialogue.

"This is the only talent we have, to create bridges," said spokesman Mario Marazziti. "We can prevent the misuse of religions for making war. We can find out again that religions are for making peace."

Lawyers try to prove Filipina on murder charge was raped

AL AIN (AFP) — A teenage Filipina maid facing the death penalty for murder repeatedly complained of sexual "harassment" by her employer before he raped her, her lawyers said Wednesday.

Defence lawyers are trying to prove that Sarah Balabagan, 16, stabbed her employer in self-defence because he raped her at knifepoint. She faced the death sentence if found guilty of premeditated murder.

Ms. Balabagan told reporters before a hearing of the Islamic court here Wednesday that she complained

several times to her recruitment officer of "harassment" by her United Arab Emirates employer, Mohammad Abdullatif Al Baloushi.

But she was told to obey Baloushi, she said. "If there is a need to kiss him, you kiss him," she was told before being sent back to her employer.

The court in Al Ain, 160 kilometres east of the capital Abu Dhabi, was to hear evidence from the head of the recruitment office which brought Sarah to the emirate, Mahmood Farah.

However, the officer who

heard her complaints no longer worked in the UAE, defence lawyer Mohammad Amin said.

Ms. Balabagan, dressed in a white black scarf, said she believed the court would believe she was raped.

"I still believe I'll be freed. I only defended myself," she told reporters.

She was initially sentenced to seven years in jail with a fine of 150,000 dirhams (\$40,000) after being found guilty of murder by the same court on June 26.

But she was also awarded 100,000 dirhams (\$27,000) in

compensation because the court decided Baloushi had raped her.

A retrial was ordered by the UAE president, Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, after he cancelled the first verdict.

Ms. Balabagan's claims of rape were weakened during a hearing on Saturday when doctors gave conflicting medical evidence.

The prosecution has called for the death penalty, claiming since she stabbed Baloushi 34 times, it was premeditated murder and not self-defence.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Sudan says Carey to visit in October

KHARTOUM (AP) — The archbishop of Canterbury will visit Sudan in October, two years after his visit to the rebel-held south led to the expulsion of Britain's ambassador, Sudan said. The government gave no exact date for the visit. Archbishop George Carey's office said only that Mr. Carey "hopes to" visit in October, but that the trip would not be confirmed until September. In 1993, Sudan expelled the British ambassador, Peter Streams, accusing him of interfering in its internal affairs. Britain then expelled the Sudanese envoy to London, Ali Osman Mohammad Yasin. The so-called "expulsions" were prompted by a dispute over the planned visit of Mr. Carey, who is head of the Church of England and spiritual leader of 70 million Anglicans worldwide. Mr. Carey at the time cancelled a visit to Khartoum after the Islamic government insisted he come only as its official guest. Mr. Carey declined, saying he wanted freedom of movement. He then travelled to Kenya and entered southern Sudan without the government's permission, further angering the regime.

Lawyer sues to block Egypt from Beijing talks

CAIRO (AFP) — An Egyptian lawyer has filed suit against President Hosni Mubarak to block his country's participation in the U.N. conference on women in Beijing. "This conference calls for free sex and is against religious values and traditions," Abdul Halim Mandour wrote in his suit to a Cairo administrative court. "Moreover, the women who travelled to it travelled without a Muhrim", a brother, husband or father required as a male companion by Islamic law, Mr. Mandour said. He filed his suit against Mr. Mubarak, as well as the prime minister, the heads of the two houses of parliament and several ministers. The court will begin hearing the case in a few days, the legal sources said. Last week, the imam of Al Azhar, Sunni Islam's highest institution, slammed the conference as anti-religious.

Jewish Agency to search for seized funds

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The president of the Jewish Agency, Abraham Burg, is to go to Switzerland to try to recover funds taken from Jews in World War II and transferred to Swiss banks by the Nazis, the agency said Tuesday. A spokesman for the quasi-governmental agency, which is responsible for immigration, said Burg would have meetings with Swiss President Casper Willinger and George Krayir, president of the Union of Swiss Banks. Israeli organisations believe the Nazis transferred several hundred million dollars seized from Jews, particularly in April 1945 at the end of the war. The accounts were set up under pseudonyms and the survivors and descendants of the victims of the Holocaust have been unable to recover their money. Mr. Burg said he would try to find out exactly what happened to the money and find a way of giving it back to the owners, their descendants, or Jewish institutions, the spokesman added.

U.S. fines L'Oreal for allegedly boycotting Israel

WASHINGTON (AFP) — The U.S. government fined cosmetics giant L'Oreal \$1.44 million Tuesday, claiming the French company broke the law by joining a boycott against Israel called by Arab countries. L'Oreal agreed to pay the fine to avoid a long and arduous legal battle, but did not admit fault as the government contended, it said in a statement. The company took issue with the use of the word "fine" to describe its agreement with the U.S. Department of Commerce. Commerce officials, meanwhile, said the fine — one of the largest ever imposed for a boycott against Israel — would serve to remind other companies that countries are still sanctioning Israel. "The Arab boycott of Israel is not yet consigned to history," said John Despres, a Commerce Department assistant secretary. He said the law "will continue to be enforced vigorously until the boycott is completely ended." The department explained that the fines were imposed against L'Oreal because of correspondence sent to the company from two U.S. affiliates, Parbel Inc., formerly Helena Rubinstein Inc., and Cosmar Inc. U.S. officials requested anonymity said L'Oreal asked for the information concerning the affiliates' business activities in Israel in order to placate Syria, main leader of the boycott. L'Oreal President Lindsay Owen-Jones said he was "sorry that such correspondence was ever sent," and vowed it would not happen again.

Boy scouts killed in road accident

SIDON (AFP) — Three boy scouts were killed on Tuesday and 15 others injured when their bus collided with a transport truck on a highway between Sidon and the southern port of Tyre, police said. The casualties all belonged to the Kafshaf Islamiyya (Muslim boy scouts) and were in their late teens, police said. The accident took place on the Sarafand road. Both the truck and the bus overturned. More than 500 people died on Lebanon's war-battered roads in the first six months of 1995, police said at the start of August. But the press here reports deadly accidents caused by speeding almost every day. Experts have blamed the accidents on the battered state of roads, speeding, a lack of road signs and a steep rise in the number of cars — around 1.5 million registered in a country of about four million people.

Israel refuses to free imprisoned Brazilian

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel on Tuesday rejected Brazil's request to free a Brazilian national jailed for a decade for the murder of an Israeli soldier. Brazil's visiting Foreign Minister Luiz Felipe Lampreia asked Israel's justice minister to free Lamia Hassan Marouf, convicted of helping her husband kidnap and kill an Israeli soldier in 1984. The justice minister, David Libai, denied the request.

Sad memories mark meeting on children trapped in war

By Mariam Sami
The Associated Press

CAIRO — Emanuel Mourwel is 15, a refugee from southern Sudan who lost five friends to the raging civil war in his homeland. Lamia Hady, 16, still has nightmares from the killing in last year's battles in Yemen.

Both are refugees living in Cairo and for the past three days have taken part in a U.N.-sponsored conference on the effect of armed conflict on Arab children.

The meeting brought together about 40 sociologists, child psychologists and U.N. officials. It ended Tuesday with announcement of recommendations for sparing the region's children from the horrors and sorrows of armed

conflict. It is part of a wider effort to include meetings in other regions — that eventually is expected to produce a U.N. document meant to help children throughout the world trapped in war.

The Cairo meeting, organised by the U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the U.N. Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), sought the views of 21 children — Sudanese, Yemenis, Egyptians and Palestinians.

Over 100 million Arab children have been orphaned, lost a limb, lost their homes or been devastated in other ways by conflict since World War II, said Sarojini Vithachi, UNICEF's regional director.

At least half of the 21 Arab

states have suffered armed conflict in recent history. The five Arab-Israeli wars are well known, but other confrontations have drawn less international attention.

Last year's Yemen civil war mirrored battles in the 1960s between traditionalists and leftists. The Sudan civil war, in which Christians and adherents of tribal faiths have fought the Muslim government since 1983, has led to 1.3 million deaths from fighting or ensuing famines.

The numbers are large, but the children tell their stories in small, distinct memories. "Our house was heavily shelled by the government forces, and me and my five brothers and sisters hid under the bed," said Mourwel, recounting an attack on Wau, his southern town.

His reaction was not revenge, but hope. He drew his hands together as a symbol of a world linked in cooperation and said: "I want all the countries to be together in peace."

The Yemeni girl, Lamia Hady, said she had nightmares about the war in the spring and summer of 1994. She recalled one scene of death at a well where she went daily to draw water — and which was bombed just minutes after she filled her buckets.

The meeting in Cairo had the bureaucratic title "Consultation on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Children in the Arab Region." The adviser to the session, U.N. adviser to the session, said its purpose was simple: "A determined stand by the inter-

national community... against violations of children's rights."

The violations range from keeping a child from playing or going to school — to rape, torture and forced service as soldiers. The U.N.'s definition of a child is anyone under 18.

The participants split into groups to make recommendations on the meeting's five themes: Children as untouchable zones of peace; women as peacemakers and victims of violence; helping children recover from war's trauma; the media's role in highlighting injustice against children; and education as an instrument for tolerance.

Among the 10 pages of recommendations were making it a crime to block deliv-

ery of humanitarian aid to children and organising "psychological first aid" for youngsters caught up in war.

The participating children exchanged addresses and signed each other's suggested remedies, some giggling in the process.

Recommendations from the meeting, along with an earlier session on sub-Saharan Africa and later ones in Asia, the Americas and Europe, are to be presented to the U.N. General Assembly next year.

But Gracia Machel, a former education minister from Mozambique, said protecting children will require more than just issuing recommendations.

"This study alone will not change the world," she said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 77111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

13:15 Fireman Sam
13:30 The Happy Professor
13:50 My Secret Identity
14:15 NBA
15:00 Pirates Island
15:30 Take Your Pick
16:00 Dead Men's Tales
16:30 I Witness Video
17:00 Children's Programme — Rahan
17:30 Varieties and Game Show
18:00 News in French
19:15 Magazine
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 National Geographic
20:30 The Album Show
21:15 Murder She Wrote
22:00 News in English
22:25 Feature Film
23:29 Shotgun
00:30 Perfect Stranger

PRAYER TIMES

04:44 Fajr
10:05 (Sunrise) Dhuha
12:36 Dhuhur
16:12 'Asr
19:07 Maghrib
20:25 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swireh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel.
637505
St. Joseph Church, Tel. 624900

Church of the Annunciation Tel.

637430
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terrasanta Church Tel. 623606
Church of the Annunciation Tel.
623541
Anglican Church Tel. 630851, Tel.
628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.
771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel.
775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Armenian International Church Tel.
652526
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel.
824328
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 664195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654832
Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.
Fine weather conditions will prevail during the weekend with temperatures below average by 4 degrees, easterly and relative humidity rising slightly. Clouds will be seen at low altitudes with winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate and seas calm.
Min./Max. temp.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

AMMAN

18/28
Aqaba 25/36
Deserts 16/32
Jordan Valley 24/35

Yesterday's high temperatures:

Amman 29 Aqaba 38, Humidity readings: Amman 48 per cent, Aqaba 30 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Mikhles Halasah 819220
Dr. Ghaleb Zawaidh 736011
Dr. Youssef Faqih 756988
Dr. Mohammad Shoaib 652693
Fina pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairook pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 649945
Shmoosani pharmacy 637660
Nairook pharmacy 623672
Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ahmad Oanu (—)
Al Ouds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Akram Haddad 985555
Khalifah pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate
Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192 631111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 630321
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage
Complaints 897467
Amman Municipality
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone
Repairs 623101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Radio Jordan 773111
Jordan Television 774111
Water Authority 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power
Company 636381
RJ Flight Information 06-53230
Queen Alia Int. Airport 06-53230

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Haseen Medical Centre 813813/33
Khalifah Maternity, J. Amn 642816

Akileh Maternity, J. Amn

Jabal Amman Maternity 642862
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine Shmeisani 664174
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musader Hospital 667279
The Islamic Abdali 6662757
Al-Ahli Abdali 6641646
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 7771013
Al-Baskir, J. Ashrafiah 7751176
Army, Shmarka 8916115
Queen Alia Hospital 60224950
Amal Hospital 607155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital
17500 (09)900560
Al-Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990
IBRD:
Princess Basma Hospital (02)755555
Great Catholic Hospital (02)72725
Jin Al-Safes Hospital (02)347100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia In-

International Airport Tel. (08)53200

5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

04:25 Singapore, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
05:30 Aden (RJ)
06:15 Sana'a (RJ)
06:15 Muscat (RJ)
06:15 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
06:35 New Delhi (RJ)
06:35 Beirut (RJ)
06:35 Colombo (RJ)
06:35 New Delhi (RJ)
06:35 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
06:35 Athens (RJ)
06:35 Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)
06:35 Casablanca, Tunis (RJ)
06:35 Athens (RJ)
06:35 Doha (RJ)
06:35 Rome (RJ)
06:35 Rome (add) (RJ)
06:35 Larnaca (RJ)
06:35 Dubai (add) (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:50 Abu Dhabi (GF)
13:00 Doha (QF)
13:40 Sharjah (AH)
13:40 Abu Dhabi, Doha (GF)
14:00 Riyadh (SV)
17:00 Rome (AZ)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

06:40 Beirut (RJ)
12:00 Toronto, Montreal (RJ)
12:15 Rome (RJ)
12:30 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)
12:40 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
13:10 Paris (RJ)
13:10 Rome (add) (RJ)
13:25 Athens (RJ)
13:25 London (RJ)
20:35 Larnaca (RJ)
21:10 Madrid (RJ)
21:20 Doha (RJ)
21:30 Doha (RJ)
21:45 Doha (RJ)
22:00 Abu Dhabi (RJ)
22:30 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)
23:30 Bahrain (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

07:40 Sharjah, Abu Dhabi (GF)
08:45 Beirut (ME)
14:30 Damascus, Doha (QF)
14:30 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain, Muscat (GF)
15:30 Riyadh (SV)
21:25 Cairo (MS)

HUAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple 600/400
Banana 680
Banana (Mukammal) 620
Cabbage 130/180
Carrot 330/200
Cauliflower 260/180
Cucumbers (large) 150/100
Cucumbers (small) 260/180
Eggplant 200/120
Figs 350/250
Garlic 700/500
Grapes 750/600
Lemon (yellow) 500/400
Lemon (green) 350/250
Marrow (large) 200/120
Marrow (small) 380/280
Mushrooms 140/80
Okra 800/700
Onion (dry) 230/150
Orange 450/350
Peaches 650/550
Pepper (hot) 300/1

Jordan, Morocco should cooperate in preparing for MENA summit — Regent

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, has underlined the need for promoting cooperation and mutual exchange between Morocco and Jordan in planning for the future of the Middle East and the North Africa region.

Speaking during a meeting at the Royal Court with Moroccan envoy David Andre Azoulay, Prince Hassan said that the upcoming Middle East and North Africa (MENA) conference will discuss a host of projects that will benefit all the countries of the region.

Mr. Azoulay, who is private advisor to King Hassan II of Morocco, reiterated the need for Jordanian-Moroccan cooperation at this "important stage of the region's history that is witnessing rapid developments and changes."

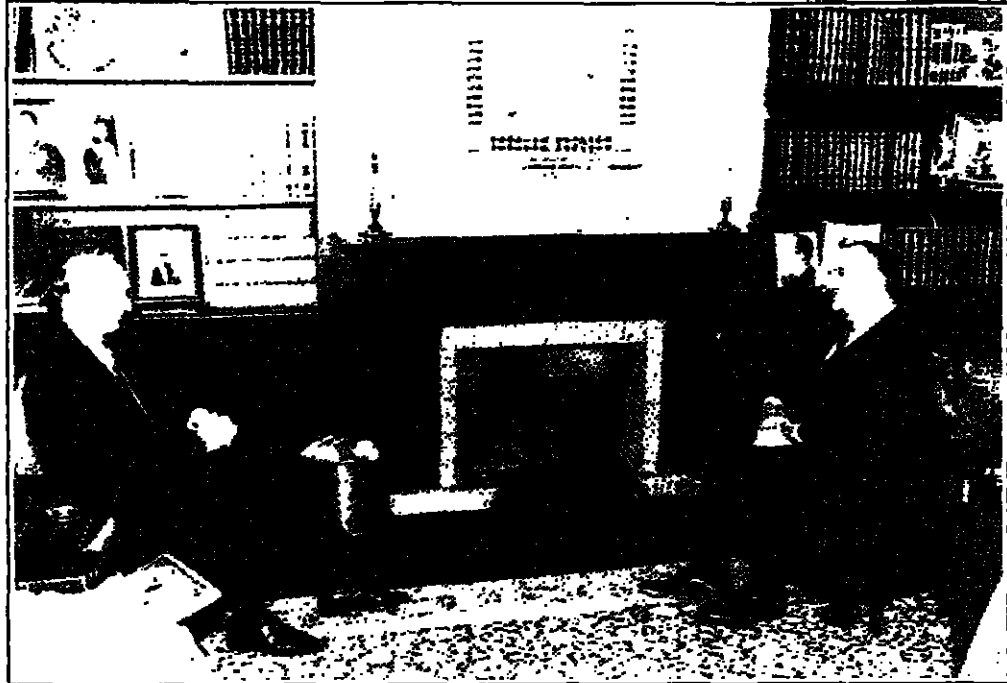
He said that Morocco, which arranged for the Casablanca MENA conference last year was ready to

help Jordan prepare successfully for the Amman MENA conference.

Mr. Azoulay later met

Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti and reviewed Moroccan-Jordanian relations and pan-Arab

affairs as well as ongoing arrangements for the MENA conference scheduled for late October.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, Wednesday confers with Moroccan envoy David Andre Azoulay (Petra photo)

House to discuss violations of public freedoms

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

Amman — The Lower House of Parliament is expected to hold a special session next week to discuss the report of its Public Freedoms Committee on the situation of public freedom in the country with special emphasis on the withdrawal of passports, freedom of expression and political prisoners.

According to Bassam Haddadin, rapporteur for the committee, the government's practices vis-a-vis human rights and public freedoms should be properly evaluated.

In the report, the committee pointed to violations of freedom of expression and freedom to hold public meetings and called on the government to "abide by their own law."

The committee also adopted the case

of Jordanians whose passports have been withdrawn or replaced by two-year temporary passports.

While the report mentioned that the committee held talks with Minister of Interior Salameh Hammad on the issue and agreed to correct all violations, it said it still considers "the right of the citizen to a nationality or passport as a sacred right that should not be taken or given on the basis of nepotism."

The report also tackled the municipal elections of the Zarqa governorate held in mid-July and insisted that the government remain neutral in all procedures adopted before and during municipal elections in the future and pledged to "continue looking into the remarks and questions raised by deputies on this issue."

The committee also called for the compensation of those who were

charged in the Mu'ta University case after they were acquitted. The case involved six students who were tried for sedition but were later acquitted by the appeals court.

As for political prisoners, Mr. Haddadin said that the committee has succeeded in "cleansing political detention centres," by which he meant there were fewer political detainees.

"We have been informed by the minister that only three political detainees are held at present," said deputy Haddadin.

"The committee cannot be neutral," Mr. Haddadin said. "But it also believes in the necessity of bringing the government and the opposition together in a serious dialogue on all pending issues of interest and importance to the country."

Germany grants Jordan JD 20m in technical and financial aid

AMMAN (J.T.) — German and Jordanian economists Wednesday wound up two days of meetings in Amman by announcing a 42 million mark (nearly JD 20 million) in German financial and technical assistance to the Kingdom for 1995.

The talks led on the German side by Herbert Sahlmann, head of the Middle East Desk at the Federal German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development and by Nabil Ammari, secretary general of the Ministry of Planning, covered a wide range of topics related to bilateral cooperation.

According to the minutes of the meetings, signed by Dr. Ammari and Dr. Sahlmann, the sum of 30 million marks will come in the form of a soft loan to finance the replacement of the old water network in the Amman region and 12 million marks will be provided in the form of technical assistance on several projects connected with water, the environment, agriculture, health, archaeology and energy.



Dr. Herbert Sahlmann (second left), head of the Middle East Desk at the Federal German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, with Dr. Nabil Ammari Wednesday sign the financial agreement for assistance to the Kingdom (Petra photo)

Charge d'Affaires Michael Bock at the German embassy in Amman told the Jordan Times that the talks in the past two days were within a programme of annual meetings between the two sides to discuss and follow up the implementation of projects and define new ones.

He said that apart from Jordanian schemes the two sides reviewed ideas and proposals for regional projects that can be implemented with German and European Union financial and technical assistance. The projects include building bridges, water canals and the distribution of power.

According to Dr. Ammari the talks also covered prospects for financing an irrigation network in the Adasieh, Deir Alla region as well as the electric power linkage between Jordan, Palestine and Israel, in addition to the expansion of the Aqaba airport.

Prince Ra'ad opens medical conference

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan, in its preparations for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) conference in October, welcomes investments in different development projects including health and medical institutions, said His Royal Highness Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid the Chief Chamberlain Wednesday in an opening address to a gastroenterology meeting.

The three-day meeting is organised by the Arab Society of Gastroenterology (ASG) and the Jordanian Society of Gastroenterology (JSG).

The meeting will be attended by nearly 500 delegates from Jordan and Arab and foreign countries.

Jordan has attained a prominent stand in the region for its excellent medical and health services, the Prince said. The country welcomes investments in health spas and provides facilities at the mineral springs and the Dead Sea for such projects, he said.



Chief Chamberlain Prince Ra'ad Ben Zeid Wednesday opens a meeting on gastroenterology. The opening ceremony was also attended by Health Minister Aref Batayneh (Petra photo)

Health Minister Aref Batayneh said the gathering of a large number of specialists in Jordan offers a chance for the exchange of ideas and expertise to promote the medical profession in Jordan and the Arab region.

According to JSG President Hashem Abu Hassan a total of 50 working papers

on gastroenterology are to be reviewed by the delegates.

On the sidelines of the conference, held at the Amman Philadelphia Hotel, the organisers have arranged for an exhibition of medical equipment from Arab and foreign pharmaceutical firms.

The meetings will be

attended by delegates from the following countries: Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Bahrain, Yemen, Sudan, Egypt, the U.S., Britain and Jordan in addition to heads of gastroenterology societies in Zimbabwe, Greece and South Africa.

Palestinian Affairs Department rejects UNRWA college closure

'Decision violates agreement between agency and Jordan'

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Department of Palestinian Affairs Wednesday rejected a decision taken by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) to close down the Educational Sciences College near Amman and said that it has reported to the government the recent developments concerning the closure issue.

Department Director Ibrahim Tarshihi said in a statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that he was surprised by the UNRWA decision which was conveyed to him by Mohammad Abdul Mu'men. UNRWA's deputy

director general in Jordan, "I told Mr. Abdul Mu'men that the agency's decision was unacceptable because it adversely affects Jordan as a country hosting Palestinian refugees and harms the Middle East peace process," said Mr. Tarshihi.

The UNRWA decision also violates an agreement concluded by the agency and Jordan which prohibits the agency from taking any reduction of its health and educational services in the Kingdom, added Mr. Tarshihi.

The closure was protested earlier by college dean

Izz Eddin Manasrah who said that the agency had informed him of its decision to shut down the college for budget constraints.

"I have requested Mr. Abdul Mu'men to convey the department's views to UNRWA headquarters in Jordan totally rejecting the agency's decision and also to relay Jordan's views to the UNRWA Commissioner General Iler Turkmen," said Mr. Tarshihi.

"But Mr. Abdul Mu'men returned to my office two days later to reaffirm the UNRWA director's insistence on his position over the closure citing financial

reasons and asking that the students be absorbed in private universities here," Mr. Tarshihi said.

Not only did we voice our objection to the closure but also to any attempts by UNRWA to charge fees from the refugee students, Mr. Tarshihi said. Such a move would adversely affect the living conditions of refugees in Jordan, he added.

Mr. Tarshihi said his department had revealed the recent developments to the Foreign Ministry and was hoping that the problem would soon be solved.

Schools to be given wider scope of authority



Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Abdul Raouf Rawabdeh disclosed Wednesday that the ministry was going ahead with plans to give schools a wider margin of decentralised authority.

Under this plan each school will have its own individual agenda, Mr. Rawabdeh said. Each school will have the authority to choose its own programmes and extra-curricular activities and will not be forced to

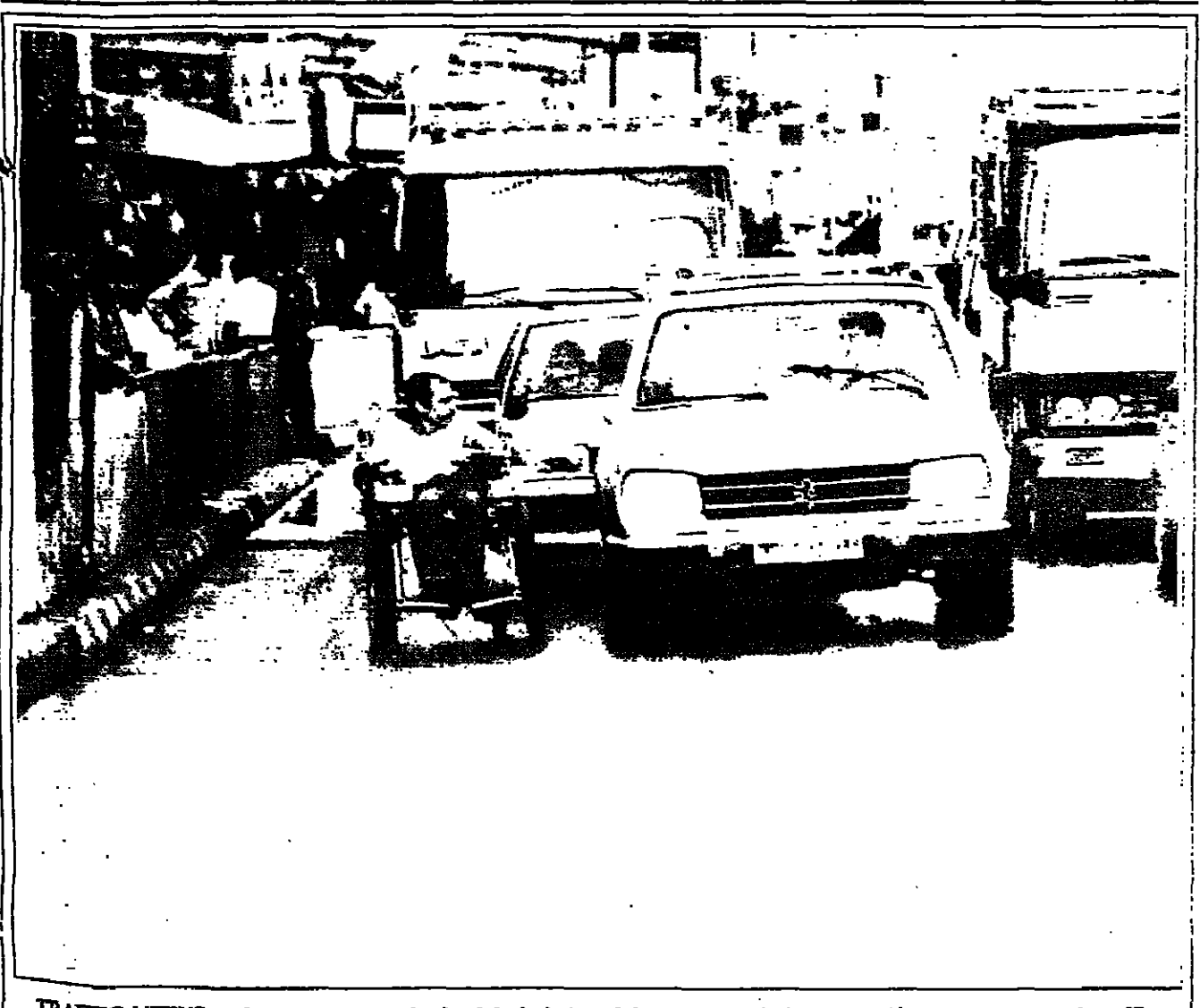
abide by rules from the central educational department.

Mr. Rawabdeh was speaking at a meeting with the ministry's planning committee.

The plan gives authority to the school principal to work out her/his own school's technical programmes and to supervise plans for developing the school's interaction with the local community, according to the minister. Acting secretary general of the ministry, Thaouan

Obeidat said students will still have to learn the national anthem by heart, and school principals are still to draw up local community activity plans and educational supervisors will continue to prepare training material for teachers.

According to Dr. Obeidat, educational departments in the governorates will have to arrange for the publication of school gazettes and offer housing loans to local teachers.



TRAFFIC VIEWS: A battery-operated wheelchair being driven alongside heavy traffic pauses at a red traffic light where it is eyed by passers-by and drivers in downtown Amman (Photo by Yousef Al 'Allan)

Ex-conservative premier switches sides over Australian republic

SYDNEY (AFP) — Australia's republican cause received a major boost Wednesday as former Liberal Prime Minister and staunch monarchist Malcolm Fraser publicly switched sides to announce his support for a republic.

And he blamed the antics of Britain's young royals for his change of heart.

"Emotionally, I have been attached to the monarchy because I believe nations should protect their past and build on it for the future," Mr. Fraser wrote in his regular column in the Australian newspaper.

But he added that for a variety of reasons, "which relate more to what has happened in Britain than what has happened in Australia, I now accept that a republic is

inevitable and right."

Mr. Fraser, prime minister for seven years to March 1983, later went on radio to amplify his newfound conviction that Australia should sever its link to the throne, blaming Britain's young royals for his change of heart.

He said their behaviour showed they had no loyalty to the institution of which they were a part, adding: "With modern media around and antics going on in front of the whole world, it's just not appropriate."

Mr. Fraser became a demon of the labour movement when he won the 1975 election after Labour Prime Minister Gough Whitlam was sacked by the queen's representative, Governor General Sir John Kerr, to

resolve a constitutional crisis.

But Mr. Fraser made it clear Wednesday he did not necessarily support Prime Minister Paul Keating's route to a republican future. "I do not necessarily see it happening according to the Keating timetable," Mr. Fraser said.

Mr. Keating has been the most visible and voluble advocate of a republic although support is now evident across the political spectrum.

The government plans a referendum, if it retains power at the upcoming election, to decide whether the country should become a republic on Jan. 1, 2001.

The Liberal Party has many admitted republican supporters, but not its leader.

John Howard, an avowed monarchist who heads the conservative coalition opposition in Canberra.

Mr. Fraser said it would be tragic if the proposal for a republic were forced through a referendum with a narrow majority and he believed the government and opposition had to seek agreement to remove the issue from the political arena.

This would depend entirely on whether Mr. Keating was "prepared to pursue an act of statesmanship and take positive steps to take the heat out of the issue by establishing a process that will enable Australia as a nation to move forward," said Mr. Fraser.

Japan tries to defuse row with China over aid cuts

TOKYO (R) — Japan tried Wednesday to defuse a row with China over aid cuts to protest against Beijing's nuclear tests, but China kept up its angry criticism of Tokyo's action.

Tokyo had announced Tuesday it was freezing most of its grant aid to Beijing, which makes up the smallest portion of its financial assistance to China, and was also considering a cut in more important low-interest yen loans.

After a day of intense debate between Foreign Ministry officials keen to avoid harming Sino-Japanese relations and parliamentarians wanting stronger action, the government said Wednesday it had decided not to touch the yen loans.

Chinese Ambassador Xu Dunxin was summoned to the Foreign Ministry by Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Sadayuki Hayashi and was told of the action Japan planned.

But Mr. Xu, who called Japan's decision "unwise", vehemently protested

against Japan even cutting grant aid, saying this could harm bilateral relations.

A Japanese Foreign Ministry official quoted Mr. Xu as saying China opposed linking economic aid with political issues.

"Such a step will deeply hurt the feelings of the Chinese public. It is like dashing cold water on budding Sino-Japanese ties," Mr. Xu was quoted as saying.

"It will have a negative effect on Sino-Japanese relations," he said.

In a rare use of its diplomatic clout, Japan had decided to freeze most grant aid until China agreed to stop conducting any more nuclear tests. Beijing resumed nuclear tests in May and conducted a second test blast earlier this month despite a storm of worldwide protest.

Tokyo decided to curb grant aid to around 500 million yen (\$5.20 million) in the current fiscal year, ending next March 31, down from about 7.8 billion yen (\$81.2 million) the previous

year. Mr. Xu accused Tokyo of inconsistency in its nuclear policy, noting that despite its vocal anti-nuclear stance Japan was under the protection of the U.S. nuclear umbrella.

Mr. Xu also attacked Japan for making the decision in a year marking the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II.

"In China we would hope that Japan would reflect on the damage it caused other nations (during the war) and take appropriate measures," Mr. Xu was quoted as saying.

Mr. Xu said China had been invaded many times by powerful countries in recent history, but he said Japan had caused the worst devastation. He said China had learned a painful lesson from its history — that a weak country is bullied.

In response to Mr. Xu's criticism, Vice Foreign Minister Hayashi rejected Mr. Xu's accusation of inconsistency and strongly denied Tokyo was singling out Bei-

jing for political motives.

Mr. Hayashi said financial aid could not be provided without the understanding of the Japanese public, and Japan had decided to freeze most grant aid to make clear Japan's deep regret over China's nuclear tests.

But he added that this did not represent a revision of Japan's policy to maintain stable ties with China.

Last December, Japan agreed to provide 580 billion yen (\$6.04 billion) in a new three-year aid package to China starting next year.

During negotiations over the soft loans — the fourth tranche to be offered to China since diplomatic ties between Tokyo and Beijing were normalised in 1972 — Japan had warned that further nuclear testing could endanger the package.

In an aid package which covered fiscal 1990 to 1995, Tokyo extended \$10 billion yen (\$8.43 billion) in similar loans.

Georgia promises to clamp down on terrorism

TBILISI (R) — Georgia promised special measures to clamp down on terrorism Wednesday after leader Eduard Shevardnadze survived an apparent assassination attempt with cuts and bruises.

"Special joint measures will be undertaken after consultations and meetings between the prosecutors office, the Interior Ministry and the Defence Ministry," Security Minister Igor Georgadze told local television.

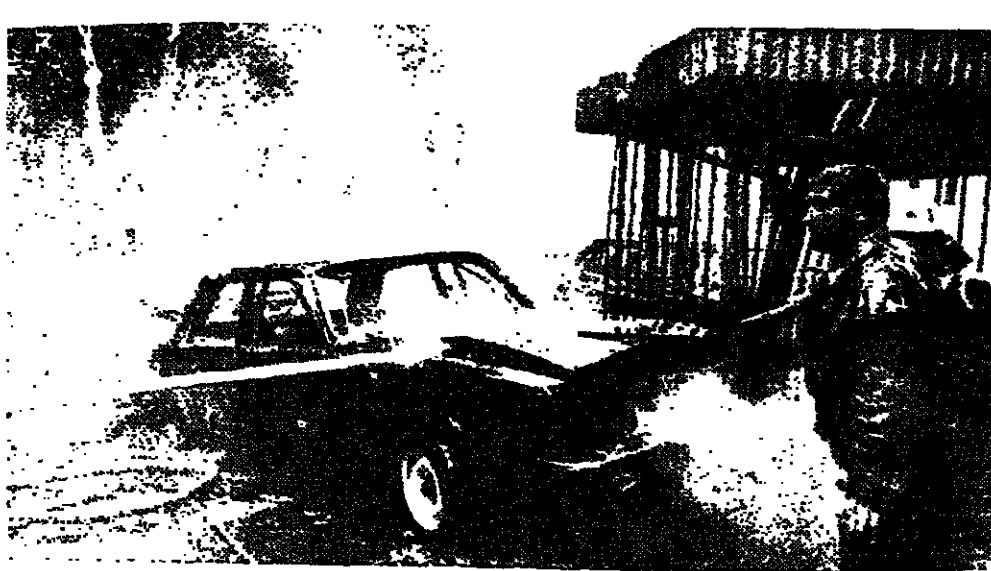
He said the government had received hints that there might be an attack well before Tuesday's car bomb exploded outside the parliament building.

Mr. Shevardnadze, 67, the last foreign minister of the former Soviet Union, was hurt in the blast but released from hospital after treatment for minor injuries.

Tbilisi's main Rustaveli Avenue, a tree-lined street of government buildings, was closed again to traffic Wednesday, but security remained tight. Nervous soldiers checked documents carefully and armoured personnel carriers stood at key buildings.

Interfax News Agency said all Interior Ministry personnel had been placed on full alert after the attack.

Parliament will meet in special session to discuss what measures should be



Firefighters hose down the smouldering remains of the destroyed car of Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze, which was blown up before the ceremony of the signing of the new Georgian constitution. Mr. Shevardnadze suffered minor injuries (AFP photo)

taken after the attack on Mr. Shevardnadze, who played a key role in ending the cold war.

The government and parliament held an extraordinary joint session on Tuesday night and local television and radio reports said several deputies demanded that a state of emergency be introduced, at least in the capital.

"This terrorist act is a grave crime against Mr. Shevardnadze and against the state," said a statement by parliamentary deputies read out on local television.

"Its aim was to destabilise the republic, ruin the state system and unleash chaos."

A separate statement by the government urged people to remain calm but to be vigilant. It said the new constitution would be enforced and parliamentary and presidential elections held according to the basic law.

Mr. Shevardnadze's car was leaving the inner courtyard of the Georgian parliament when a green Soviet-made Niva four-wheel-drive vehicle exploded nearby.

A deputy speaker of parliament and several body-

guards were also injured. No one was killed.

Immediately after the explosion Mr. Shevardnadze, clearly shaken, condemned those who had organised the explosion as terrorists and criminals out to destabilise the trans-Caucasus state ahead of a presidential election he is expected to win.

"They want the mafia to run the country. They will not get it," he told local television. "This is the last act of terrorism in Georgia. The whole people will rise and raze them to the ground."

Tapes depict Simpson detective as racist, rogue cop

LOS ANGELES (R) — The O.J. Simpson murder trial has reached a crucial turning point as Judge Lance Ito decides whether jurors will hear controversial tapes in which a key prosecution witness comes across as a racist, rogue cop.

When portions of the audiotapes were played publicly for the first time Tuesday, detective Mark Fuhrman's monotone voice echoed through the downtown courtroom and across Los Angeles with a litany of racial slurs and shocking

tales of police brutality.

It was the same voice that jurors heard five months ago when, as one of the prosecution's star witnesses, Mr. Fuhrman told of finding a bloody glove at Simpson's estate and swore he had not uttered the word "nigger" in the past decade.

But in the taped interviews conducted by aspiring screenwriter Laura Hart McKinny from 1985 to 1994, Mr. Fuhrman is heard not only using the racial slur 41 times but also spewing invective against Mexicans

and women.

By the end of Tuesday's emotionally draining court session, even the prosecution's star witness, Mr. Fuhrman, was suddenly eager to downplay his importance.

While the jury was absent and has yet to hear the tapes, a worldwide TV audience of millions tuned in for the latest twist in what has been dubbed the "trial of the century."

Calling Mr. Fuhrman "L.A.'s worst nightmare," defence attorney Gerald

Uelman made an impassioned appeal to Judge Ito to play the tapes for the mostly black jury and put Mr. Fuhrman back on the witness stand.

The defence team hopes to bolster its claims — so far unsupported by even a shred of evidence — that Mr. Fuhrman planted the glove to frame the black football hero for the June 12, 1994, murders of his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman.



Colombian police investigators and army troops inspect the bodies of Carepa residents massacred at a banana plantation (AFP photo)

At least 16 killed in Colombian massacre

BOGOTA (AP) — Suspected leftist rebels killed at least 16 people Tuesday in a banana plantation, the third massacre in less than a month in one of the country's most violent regions.

The gunmen stopped a truck carrying workers to the plantation in northwest Colombia's steamy Uraba region, a soldier at the local army brigade said in a telephone interview.

"The gunmen ordered the people off the truck and opened fire," the soldier said. The brigade dispatched troops to the site to investigate the massacre.

The soldier, speaking on condition of anonymity, said he could not confirm a radio

report that 23 people were killed.

Survivors blamed leftist rebels, according to Osvaldo Munoz, mayor of Carepa, a town 10 kilometres from the massacre site.

The victims were members of Hope, Peace and Liberty, a political party founded by demobilised rebels. Mr. Munoz told RCN radio.

The party, known by its initials in Spanish as the EPL, has been in a bitter dispute with rebels of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, which backs the Communist Party and the leftist Patriotic Union Party.

On Aug. 12, gunmen killed 18 people in a bar in Chig-

odoro, 10 kilometres south of Carepa. A right-wing paramilitary group is suspected in that attack, which was apparently mounted in reprisal for the killings of six people, including three off-duty soldiers, hours earlier in a nearby town.

A human rights group, the Andean Commission of Jurists, identified Uraba as one of the deadliest regions in Colombia. An average of three people are killed there every day for political reasons, the report said.

Uraba is located near the Caribbean and 60 kilometres from the Panamanian border.

Hearing on Seoul store collapse opens

SEOUL (R) — Twenty-five South Koreans went on trial Wednesday over the deadly collapse of a Seoul department store last June as hundreds of victims' relatives held a rally demanding heavy punishment for the defendants.

The accused stood before a three-judge panel at the Seoul district criminal court hearing the case. Ino, South Korea's worst peacetime disaster, in which more than 500 people were killed.

The defendants included Lee Joon, 73, founder and owner of the Sampoong Department Store, which collapsed on June 29 leaving at least 501 people dead and

six others missing. Mr. Lee has been charged with criminal negligence.

They also included Mr. Lee's 42-year-old son Han Sang, store president, and other executives of the store and its sister company and builder, Sampoong Construction Co., who were arrested on similar charges. Shoddy construction work was alleged to have caused the collapse.

The other defendants comprised 10 former city officials who were charged with taking bribes to ignore illegal changes made to the structure of the building.

Under criminal negligence charges. Mr. Lee, his son

and other executives face up to five years' in jail. Sentences for those charged with bribery depend on the amount of money involved.

As the court hearing proceeded, more than 200 relatives of the victims, wearing traditional white mourning clothes, staged a peaceful sit-in protest outside the court building, demanding death sentences for both Mr. Lee and his son.

"President Kim Young-Sam of the accident republic, solve the Sampoong problem," read one placard.

The relatives demanded the government re-investigate the case thoroughly.

China hits out at Tibet critics

BEIJING (AFP) — China paved the way for Friday's 30th anniversary of the "autonomous region" it created in Tibet by renewing attacks on the Dalai Lama and foreign critics of its human rights record in Tibet.

"We can assure the whole world that the new Socialist Tibet is going to pursue its progress," the Communist Party weekly, Outlook, said in a long article to mark the anniversary.

"The party's policy on regional autonomy in Tibet has won some great victories, especially in the fight against the 'clique' of the Dalai Lama who call for the independence of Tibet," said the magazine.

The article also condemned "anti-Chinese forces who attack China on the question of Tibet, in the name of human rights."

"We are sure that under the leadership of the Communist Party, the different nationalities will remain united for a Socialist Tibet that is rich and civilised."

High-profile and high-security commemorations for the anniversary are to be held by the Communist authorities in Lhasa, the Tibet capital, on Friday.

Beijing says Tibet has been part of China since the 13th century.

Chinese troops entered Tibet in 1950 and the region's spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, was forced to flee into exile nine years later after a failed uprising. The autonomous region was set up in 1965.

China is regularly accused of human rights abuses against an independence movement that has been active again since 1980, encouraged by the Dalai Lama, a Nobel Peace Prize winner.

The Tibet Daily, received

Wednesday, warned independence activists. "People have to understand that the struggle between the separatists and us is a longstanding battle," it said.

"This struggle is not of a national or religious nature, it is political and the question is to know whether we want a unified and sovereign state or not," the daily said.

"We must resolutely fight the separatists and the Dalai Lama clique," the newspaper added.

Tibet has been tense again since May because of the new dispute between Beijing and the Dalai Lama over the choice of the 11th reincarnation of the Panchen Lama, the second most senior figure in Tibetan Buddhism.

Beijing was surprised and angered by the Dalai Lama's announcement that he had found a successor, a six-year-old boy, for the Panchen Lama who died in 1989. The government, which says it should have the final say, says the choice is "illegal and invalid."

Tension can be seen in the government's refusal to give visas to Tibetan exiles wanting to go to the non-governmental forum ahead of next week's U.N. World Women's Conference.

The Chinese government delegation for the 30th anniversary ceremonies arrived in Lhasa Tuesday. It is led by Vice-Premier Wu Bangguo and army Chief of Staff Zhang Wannian.

Chinese national television has been showing almost daily reports on economic development in Tibet and the happiness of the inhabitants.

Meanwhile more than a dozen Tibetans living abroad said Wednesday that China, in a rare move, had allowed them to attend the

where they would campaign against forced sterilisation and discrimination in their homeland.

The arrival of the delegation here contrasts with the fate of three foreign-based Tibetan groups that the United Nations sought to have accredited for the meeting, but which have allegedly been denied by the Chinese authorities.

"The Chinese have failed to totally exclude us," Kunzang Yuthok, director of the Seattle-based Tibetan Rights Campaign (TRC), which said it had been denied visas, declared in a statement received here.

The non-governmental organisation (NGO) forum was scheduled to open Wednesday, and then partly run in parallel with an inter-governmental meeting, the fourth World Conference on Women, starting Sept. 4.

A delegation official said the group would address problems "faced by Tibetan women living under foreign occupation inside Tibet."

"These issues include forced and coerced sterilisation, abortions and other family planning methods imposed by Chinese government policy and the imprisonment and torture of Tibetan women, including nuns," the statement said. "The delegation also hopes to develop an effective conflict resolution process in order to achieve peace in Tibet."

With the support of other NGOs, the Tibetan women hope that their voices will be "heard loud and clear in Beijing," the statement said, without elaborating.

Diana ends visit to Washington

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Britain's Princess Diana made a quiet weekend trip to Washington to visit an ailing Brazilian diplomat whose wife is a close friend of the princess. The Washington Post reported Tuesday. The Post said the princess spent much of the weekend at Georgetown University Hospital, where Ambassador Paulo Tarso Flecha De Lima underwent surgery to remove a blood clot in his brain. She arrived Saturday and left Monday, according to the newspaper, which also published a photo of Princess Diana behind dark sunglasses. Brazilian embassy spokesman Pedro Borio told the newspaper that the princess also made a surprise visit to other intensive care patients. The princess is close to the diplomat's wife, Lucia Flecha De Lima, and stayed at the couple's Washington residence during the visit.

Former Beatle cancels tour to visit daughter in hospital

LONDON (AP) — Former Beatles drummer Ringo Starr canceled a U.S. tour and flew to London to visit his daughter Lee, 24, in hospital after an operation to drain fluid from her brain. She entered the London clinic Friday. She is the daughter of Starr's first marriage, to Maureen Cox Starkey Tigrett, who died in January in Seattle, Washington state, after a bone marrow transplant to treat leukemia. The couple had three children — Lee and two sons, Zak, 29, and Jason, 27. The couple divorced in 1975, both remarried and she had a daughter by her second marriage. Starr, 55, visited his daughter at the £700 (\$1,085)-a-day hospital, accompanied by his second wife, actress Barbara Bach, and by Zak. Starr told reporters after the three-hour visit: "She should be out by Saturday. She had been feeling unwell and the next thing we knew she was in here. I came, as soon as I heard. Lee had the operation Friday and is now up and about." He said the cause of the build-up of fluid in his daughter's brain was still not known. "We still don't know why it happened but we know it's not meningitis," he said. Asked about the cancellation of his U.S. tour, Starr, who lives in the United States, said: "Family is more important, isn't it? We are going to stay here (in London) until she is better."

Costly eternal flame does not last long

AUCKLAND (AFP) — An eternal flame put up in a small town to mark VJ Day is proving too hot to handle now the local council has received its first gas bill. The New Zealand Herald reported Wednesday. World War II veterans convinced Morrisville, south of here, to light a flame for Aug. 15 in honour of the war dead and after the ceremony it remained alight. But Mayor Ken Thomas said they now realise it will cost a year — about \$2.28 an hour — for the gas. The town has now decided eternity should be forever. "It might have been a case of marry in haste, repent at leisure. We won't let it burn on like this that's for sure," he said.

Tony Gambrell of the local veterans association said when he saw the flames on VJ Day he was surprised at its size. "I said 'God, it's enormous', to which their comment was, 'If you're going to have a flame you want it to be seen.'"

Man walking backwards, diagonally to fulfil vow

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — A 42-year-old man has been walking backwards and diagonally since March and plans to go on like that until he has covered the entire Indonesian archipelago, a news agency reported. Mudjimart Kamari took a vow that he would undertake the walk if he was cured of a disease that crippled him for six months, Antara said. It did not elaborate on the sickness. Kamari began from his native village in Blitar district and will end in Jakarta, about 890 kilometres (556 miles) away, on Oct. 28, Antara said. It did not say how far Kamari was from his destination or how many kilometres he had walked in his zig-zagging route that in the last 5-6 months has taken him to 12 of Indonesia's 27 provinces.

Yeltsin backs Chechenya peace efforts

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin told his policy-making Security Council Wednesday he was generally satisfied with peace talks with Chechen rebels aimed at ending months of bloodshed.

"Our task is to determine how to handle the settlement of the situation in the Chechen Republic," Mr. Yeltsin said opening the meeting in the Kremlin.

The council, which groups state and parliamentary leaders, will hear proposals from its secretary, Oleg Lobov, appointed by Mr. Yeltsin as his personal representative in Chechenya.

"We have taken the right decision by changing the clock to a peaceful political settlement of the crisis," Mr. Yeltsin said.

He said he "positively evaluated" the work of the government's negotiating team which led to the signing of a military deal on July 30.

Broader Russian-Chechen talks have stalled over the future status of Chechenya. The rebels want Moscow to recognise their independence, while the Kremlin insists Chechenya stay part of Russia.

Mr. Yeltsin warned that the military accord, which provided for the disarmament of the rebels in exchange for a

partial withdrawal of the Russian troops, was only the first step towards a lasting peace.

Many thousands of people were killed in the fighting after Russia sent troops into Chechenya last December to crush its three-year independence bid. Hundreds of thousands more fled their homes to escape Russian air, artillery and ground attacks.

Mr. Lobov, who visited the region Monday and later discussed peace proposals with Russian experts working in Chechenya, voiced concern Tuesday at the slow pace of rebel disarmament, Interfax News Agency said.

"If the disarmament process is not active and constructive, there could be a danger of returning to confrontational relations," it quoted him as saying.

Interfax quoted the presidential press service as saying Mr. Lobov, a close associate of Mr. Yeltsin, would have the rank of first deputy prime minister in the Russian government.

All federal authorities in Chechenya, including the armed forces, would be subordinate to Mr. Lobov. He would be responsible for overseeing peace initiatives in the region and coordinating all government activities there.

The appointment of Mr.



A Russian specialist cuts and destroys a gun during the disarmament of Chechen detachments in Vedeno, Chechenya (AFP photo)

Lobov appears to push Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin to the sidelines.

Until now, Mr. Chernomyrdin has stolen the limelight from Mr. Yeltsin by launching peace talks in June as part of a deal to end a hostage crisis in southern Russia.

Mr. Chernomyrdin's success in publicly negotiating with rebel field commander Shamil Basayev not only

boosted his popularity ahead of parliamentary elections in December but made him a possible rival in presidential polls next year.

Mr. Yeltsin now appears to be more actively using the Security Council, which originally approved Moscow's bid to crush Chechenya's independence drive by force, in the peace process.

Berlusconi sees no early Italian election

ROME (R) — Italy's former Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi was quoted Wednesday as saying he did not believe the early general election he has sought since his resignation would take place until it suited his opponents.

La Stampa newspaper, reporting what it said was an informal telephone interview with the media magnate and leader of the centre-right Freedom Alliance, also quoted him as saying he intended to stay out of active politics until a vote was called.

"I don't decide when an

election is going to take place. Far from it. The more I ask for one the less inclined they are to give it to me," he said.

Mr. Berlusconi, who shot to victory as a political newcomer in a general election in March 1994, was forced to resign as prime minister last December when his stormy coalition fell apart.

Former central banker Lamberto Dini has since headed a government of technocrats but has recently made clear his desire to stay on with a broadly-backed mandate to tackle reform and see Italy through its six-

month presidency of the European Union starting in January.

His administration has been backed so far in parliament by centrist and leftist parties opposed to Mr. Berlusconi.

"I'm resigned to the fact that elections will take place when it suits them," La Stampa quoted Mr. Berlusconi as saying.

It also quoted Mr. Berlusconi as attacking President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, who has been reticent about dissolving parliament, as a man "who doesn't give a damn about the country's problems".

Elections would be held when Mr. Scalfaro was sure the outcome would allow him to stay in office and when the centre-left was sure it could win, Mr. Berlusconi was quoted as saying.

"I'm going to keep quiet until the day a date for elections is set," Mr. Berlusconi said.

"When the time comes to act I'll be there if the country wants me, otherwise there's no point being part of the game. I'll go back to being an entrepreneur."

French Pacific nuclear tests could end early, Millon says

PARIS (AFP) — A series of nuclear tests planned by France to start in the South Pacific from next month could end early, Defence Minister Charles Millon said in an interview published Wednesday by the weekly Paris-Match.

He said the programme of seven or eight tests, due to end next May, could be completed early "if everything takes place as planned."

Mr. Millon explained that military planners allowed themselves a security margin taking into account risks such as bad weather. "If everything takes place as planned, then it is not impossible that we finish up a little early."

Mr. Millon said the first test would take place "during September", without giving a date, and added he would visit the Mururoa Atoll test site in French Polynesia "probably next month."

The defence minister also said that protesters who invaded the 12-mile limit around Mururoa would be dealt with "courteously and peacefully - our personnel is unarmed - but firmly."

Meanwhile Greenpeace-France complained Wednesday that French gendarmes were blocking one of its boats, the Beluga, at a lock west of Paris as it tried to head for the capital with an anti-test petition containing

3,173,000 signatures.

Greenpeace said it had been planned that "a human chain" hand over the petition at the presidential palace on Sept. 1, but that the demonstration had been banned and its planned riverside docking point sealed off by police.

The Paris prefecture said Wednesday no decision had yet been taken to ban the demonstration.

Also in Paris, three physicists who organised an appeal to President Jacques Chirac to call off the tests said 1,300 French scientists had signed it.

The three told a press conference that nearly 1,100 non-French scientists from 28 countries had signed an English version of the appeal, which stresses "the risks of dissemination of French fissile matter."

Among them were 400 Italians, 230 Germans, 80 Britons and 80 Americans, 60 Japanese and 45 Australians, said French physicist Pierre Jaegle, Alain Sureau and Harry Bernas, the organisers.

The appeal said "dissemination and proliferation go hand in hand" and added that France was setting a bad example to all countries that "identify political authority with military power."

"It is therefore vital not only to halt all tests but also to destroy stocks of military fissile matter," the appeal

said. Mr. Jaegle, Mr. Sureau and Mr. Bernas called for "genuine debate" on the French deterrent and added: "It is absolutely certain that the only logic in resuming French tests is to develop new weapons and not to validate existing weapons."

The three physicists also said there was a risk of dissemination of nuclear materials through cracks in the Mururoa Atoll and in another atoll, Fangataufa, also a site of previous tests. "No one can claim there is no danger," the three declared.

Media battle starts in Tahiti

The French government and Greenpeace opened a media war in the Tahiti capital of Papeete Tuesday, with rival press booths and news briefings to explain their version of French nuclear testing in the South Pacific.

France fired the first shot when local morning television ran a film showing French Minister for Overseas Territories Jean Jacques de Peretti scuba diving in the lagoon at Mururoa Atoll a few days ago.

Mr. Peretti was shown 40 metres underwater at the site of France's last nuclear test in 1991, holding a radioactivity metre made by a New Zealand anti-test activist.

He told viewers the radioactivity in the lagoon

was "less than under the Eiffel Tower and much less than in Sydney".

The environmental group Greenpeace fired the second volley in a small apartment overlooking Papeete Harbour, where it officially opened its media centre to hold daily briefings until the first test.

Some 30 journalists from Britain, Europe, Japan and Australia, packed like sardines into a small lounge-room to hear Greenpeace was now "on standby" to move on Mururoa.

"We are out there, we are ready to go, we are closely watching the scenery to fish for any indication that the test is imminent," said Thomas Schultz, coordinator for Greenpeace's international nuclear disarmament campaign.

Greenpeace also issued a book, Testimonies — Witnesses Of French Nuclear Testing In The South Pacific, with a Paul Gauguin-style picture of two topless Tahitian women, one wearing a gas mask, on the cover.

The book contained interviews with people who worked on either Mururoa or nearby Fangataufa Atolls. One testimony is titled The Dead Are Placed In Metal Coffins, another He Was Scarcely Recognisable As A Human Being.

Air force mounts rescue of marooned Filipinos

MANILA (R) — Two air force helicopters were sent to try to pluck men, women and children off the roofs of their homes after they were marooned by rivers of hot mud from Pinatubo volcano in the northern Philippines, local officials said Wednesday.

Nearly 65,000 people in Pampanga province fled for their lives when boiling mud cascaded down Pinatubo

after heavy rains brought by typhoon Kent loosened tonnes of volcanic debris left from its devastating 1991 eruption.

Lilia Pineda, the mayor of Lubao town, said one helicopter was circling homes where people were stranded.

"The helicopter is circling because there is a high tension wire (power line) there. It has not lowered its ropes. People are waving white

pieces of clothes. The children are among them," Mr. Pineda told a Manila radio station.

There were no reports of casualties, but tens of thousands of people who lost their homes crowded into evacuation centres. Two boys were reported missing in Manila and may have drowned, local radio reports said.

The governor of Pampanga,

ga, Lito Lapid, said rescue workers were trying to rig together thick rope to rescue those stranded in houses near the national highway and then drag them to safety.

"We cannot just sit here and watch them die. We badly need helicopters. More than 100 people are waiting to be rescued from their houses. The mudflow are very strong," he said.

Sri Lanka rebels use hijacked ferry to attack navy

COLOMBO (R) — Separatist Tamil guerrillas hijacked a state-run ferry carrying 120 people and used it to attack and sink two Sri Lankan Navy boats killing 21 sailors Tuesday, military sources said Wednesday.

They said the Irish Mona, operated by the Shipping and Rehabilitation Ministry with the assistance of the Eelam People's Democratic Party (EPDP) was hijacked after it left the eastern port of Trincomalee Monday evening.

The sources said guerrillas of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) boarded the ferry, before it could reach the northwest island of Karaitivu Tuesday morning, to attack two navy Dvora-class vessels.

"Tamil militants were on the ferry when the attack happened," one source told Reuters.

The Tigers used rocket-propelled grenades in the sinking of at least one of the

boats, the military sources said.

The Lankapuvath National News Agency quoted defence analysts as saying the Tigers may have used surface-to-surface missiles, they were not so far known to possess, to sink the boats off Mullaitivu, killing 21 sailors.

One of the boats was moving to investigate a distress signal from the ferry when it was attacked, the military sources said.

A Shipping Ministry source said the passengers may have been unloaded from the ferry before it was taken away by the LTTE to an unknown destination.

EPDP leader Douglas Devananda spoke of rumours that the ferry had been taken out to sea.

"People are saying LTTE boats are escorting the vessel out to the high sea," said Mr. Devananda, whose once rebel party now helps government forces fighting the militant LTTE.

He said passengers had been seen waving from the deck when an ill-fated navy fast-attack craft approached Tuesday.

Military sources told the news agency that LTTE cadres had waved frantically at the vessel posing as passengers in distress and then fired a rocket propelled grenade at point blank range.

A huge explosion attracted the attention of the second Dvora, which also came under fire, the sources said.

The sources said the ferry may have been hijacked by the Tigers. The navy has yet to comment.

The navy has lost three of its seven gunboats and two of its 13 Dvoras since the LTTE broke a ceasefire on April 19.

The rebel-run Tiger radio said its naval wing, the "Sea Tigers", attacked the first Israeli-built Dvora three miles (five km) from the beach. The second came in search and it too came under

attack, the radio said.

The ferry was on its way to the navy base of Karainagar on the tiny island of Karaitivu, where the inland civilian areas are controlled by the EPDP. Mr. Devananda said. The island is linked to the rebel-held Jaffna peninsula by a two-mile (three-km) causeway.

Defence officials say recent attacks by the LTTE, fighting for a homeland in the north and east of the country, appear to be part of a rebel attempt to divert the army's attention away from an expected offensive against the northern rebel stronghold of Jaffna.

Roland Hodson, humanitarian adviser at the Colombo mission of the United Nations Development Programme who has just returned from Jaffna, told Reuters the LTTE and civilians appeared to be preparing to resist an attack. He did not elaborate.

Kazakhstan votes on stronger powers for Nazarbayev

ALMATY (R) — Kazakhstan voted Wednesday on a draft constitution which, although democratic in form, could make it almost impossible to remove President Nursultan Nazarbayev from power.

A confident-looking Nazarbayev turned out to vote at mid-morning in the capital of the former Soviet republic, quipping "we trust in God" when asked what result he expected.

He promised a raft of legislation to make the constitution work. A law on elections would come first, then parliamentary polls, he told reporters.

Under the draft the president can dissolve parliament if it expresses no-confidence in the government or twice rejects his nominee for prime minister, and wins special powers to call a state of emergency or rule by decree for one year.

Parliament can only oust

him if he is incapacitated by illness or is found to have committed treason.

Asked about Wednesday's referendum on the constitution, he replied: "Today all Kazakhstan is taking part in a very great political act. It is a constitution for the people, so the people should express their opinion."

Mr. Nazarbayev, 55, has ruled by decree since parliament was dissolved in March after its election was ruled illegal. In April 95 per cent of voters backed a referendum to extend his term to 2000.

In a region where referendums typically produce massive "yes" votes the result of the latest poll is not in doubt. Even Election Commission Chairman Yuri Kim has said he expected a big vote for the draft.

"I expect over 80 per cent will participate, and from this figure 85 to 87 per cent will say yes," Mr. Kim told

Reuters.

Referendum officials said 45 per cent of Kazakhstan's 8.8 million electorate had voted by midday (0500 GMT). Polls closed at 8 p.m. (1300 GMT). Final results are due next week.

At local polling stations in central Almaty a stream of mainly elderly voters turned out early, lured by typical Soviet-style election offerings of cheap consumer goods and folk music.

"I voted 'yes'. I haven't read the constitution, but I believe Nazarbayev," retired teacher Antonina Zlezina said.

An old Russian man voted against, saying pensioners had been forgotten and he could no longer afford even the cheap medicines on offer outside the voting stations.

"There's no order or discipline and crime is all around us. It's not safe — how can you live?" he said, only to be pacified by a bunch of

flowers from a distraught official.

Opposition to the draft constitution has been muted, especially since leading opposition figure Olzhas Suleimenov accepted an offer from Mr. Nazarbayev to become ambassador to Rome.

A week-old hunger strike by 19 protesters at the opposition "House of Democracy" headquarters was called off Tuesday for fear of violating a law banning protests during referendums.

A rare opinion poll by the Giller Institute found widespread ignorance of the text and only 7.5 per cent of a sample of 1,500 voters said they had read the constitution. Over 60 per cent either "knew nothing" or had "heard something" about it.

Still, of those intending to vote, over 70 per cent said they would support the draft.

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 Jordan Press Foundation,
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 Telephones: 667171/6, 607161
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 Facsimile: 696183

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
 Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
 Jordan Times advertising department.

Targeting peace?

THE ONLY apparent "guilt" of the three Palestinian institutions in East Jerusalem that Israel closed down this week is their affiliation with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). None of the three, the Palestinian Bureau of Statistics, the Palestinian Health Council and the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation was engaged in anything illegal or contrary to the Oslo agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. The Bureau of Statistics maintains records on social, demographic, economic and environmental affairs related to the Palestinian people.

The Health Council oversees and coordinates health services extended to Palestinians and the Broadcasting Corporation administers and supervises Radio Palestine. The main reason these institutions were located in Jerusalem is because the Palestinians view the city as their future capital. One more practical reason is the centrality of Jerusalem and the availability of all facilities in the city.

Nonetheless, none of the activities of the three institutions can be viewed as unlawful or detrimental to the peace process. The opposite is true. All the operations of all these Palestinian organisations are directed for the purpose of promoting peace between the two peoples. If the only fault of these institutions is their link with the PNA, since when is the PNA a contraband or an illegal entity that is engaged in unlawful activities? Isn't Israel dealing directly with the PNA to advance peace in the area and counts on it to implement the various features of the Oslo accord and all subsequent agreements? Why then would an association with a legitimate authority become objectionable to the extent that police action was required?

Israel alleges that the three Palestinian institutions are violating the Israeli legislation that approved the Jericho-Gaza accord. This is not exactly a tenable position since the laws that Israel enacted to implement its peace agreements with the various Arab states are not necessarily correspond faithfully with its commitments under these agreements. Israeli legislation on these subject is Israeli law articulated and adopted solely by Israel in accordance with its own interpretations of the peace agreements. There is already a clear precedent for this unilateral Israeli interpretation which does not tally with the interpretation of the Palestinian side. We have already seen Israel err in interpreting the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty when the treaty law passed in the Knesset contradicted with Jordanian perspectives and the construction of the treaty itself. The case in point is Israel's treatment of Jordanian real estate properties even in East Jerusalem and the West Bank as "absentee property" under its newly adopted law, something that Jordan totally rejects.

On balance, we regard Israel's decision to close three peace-oriented Palestinian institutions as untenable legally and counterproductive politically. If Israel is targeting additional Palestinian organisations operating in East Jerusalem as it is strongly rumoured, then the damage to peace could be compounded. East Jerusalem remains an occupied territory. The institutions in question were operating there even before the PNA came into existence. Israel has no right to legislate on matters that do not fall under its jurisdiction. It is not too late to exercise statesmanship in dealing with this added complication before there are additional setbacks to peace between Israel and its immediate partner, the PNA.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

IRAQI TELEVISION broadcast of His Majesty King Hussein's address to the nation in full and without commenting on it beyond saying that the Iraqi people's intelligence would enable them to grasp its meaning and make their own conclusion is an unprecedented step, said Fahd Al Fanek, a writer in Al Ra'i. This step must have aroused the curiosity of many enemies and friends of the Iraqi regime, said the writer, who said the 42-minute speech must have prompted them to ponder over its purpose, especially as it included strong criticism of the Iraqi regime. He said, some people believed that the broadcasting of the speech was meant to tell the Iraqis that Jordan would not close its borders, would not take part in attempt to tighten the noose around Iraq and would not succumb to American pressures. Other people thought that the King's praise of Hussein Kamel Al Hassan would weaken his image before the man in the street, he added. For its part, the Iraqi leadership might have also interpreted the speech as an attempt on the part of the King to remove obstacles in the path of Jordan's rapprochement with Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Whether these ideas occurred to the Iraqi officials or not, one can only say that it was a clever move which could be a prelude to imminent reforms.

A WRITER in Al Dustour said that a real crisis has erupted in Jordan following a decision by the Council of Higher Education to accept only one third of the students who passed the tawjihi examination this year. Fakhri Kawar said that the government has been collecting huge sums of money from citizens for every procedure going through its departments as a special fee paid for higher education, but many of those who have been paying these fees have found that the universities' doors are closed to their children, who passed the general examination with high grades. The writer said that in the face of the parents' protests over such attitude, the government could well suggest that students join private universities or travel abroad to acquire higher education. But the fact that the majority cannot pay the exorbitant fees of private colleges or go abroad to study, means that whether one pays fees to government departments for normal procedures or not one cannot guarantee a seat for his children to study in Jordan's state universities, he added. The writer said that in this case, those who paid the government departments fees have the right to reimbursement.

The View from Academia

Time for a courageous decision on car tax

By Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

IN TODAY's world cars are no longer luxury commodities. There was a time when they were. Yes. And there are places, vicinities, regions and even countries where people can do without cars. For most city dwellers, however, a car is an absolute necessity. That is just the way it is.

Like all necessities, cars must continue (since the date of purchase) to meet certain standards in order to perform conveniently, efficiently and economically. One does not have to own the latest model, the most convenient, most luxurious, most expensive top-of-the-line car. But the majority should have durable, safe, strong and economical vehicles. Otherwise, there will be a great deal of inconvenience, waste of effort and resources and danger to health and life.

In the more fortunate parts of the globe, cars live up to the expectations of car-users. The vast majority of cars on the road are in extremely good shape. On the basis of the statistics I made during my trip to the U.S. (which took me from Los Angeles in the West Coast to Baltimore in the East Coast), I found that most people drive cars which are not older than five years. Clearly, some people own old cars, but these are a tiny minority in most cities.

In our own part of the world, the picture is extremely disappointing. Of course, we are not the U.S., and we cannot be even if we wanted to; and, of course, the situation in the Kingdom may be far better than that in many neighbouring and so-called developing or Third-World countries. A few months ago, I saw buses carrying pilgrims from some neighbouring countries which are in extremely awkward and dangerous condition. Compared to them, the buses carrying our own pilgrims looked like gems.

But our realisation that we are luckier than some other unfortunate countries in today's world is ultimately not much of a consolation. All you have to do is to look at the condition most of our cars on the road are in. I do not have exact statistics with me, but my guess is that 50 per cent of

cars in our major towns and cities are in bad shape. While some people own brand new, expensive and luxurious cars, most own old, unsafe or cheap/inferior models. Until now, it is considered "fashionable" and "lucky" to own a 1976 Mercedes, i.e. an almost 20-year old car. It is very common to see in our roads and alleys cars made in the early seventies. My guess is that the vast majority of cars on our roads are 15 years and older.

What is it like to own a 15 or 20-year-old car? Mechanical problems on monthly, weekly and even daily basis. This means frequent visits to repair shops and thus waste of time and money; it also means delays when the car stops suddenly in the middle of the road or when it just refuses to start in the morning. But it also means danger (when the car stalls on a highway), psychological trauma (to the motorist and the riders), and threat to the environment (older cars emit fumes, smoke and gases of all kinds).

Last year, I took my 15-year old car to the repair shop more frequently than I wished (I had to). There were mechanical problems of all sorts. And there was of course a lot of guessing on part of my cordial and patient but often too slow and cynical maintenance and repair "specialist." After so many unnerving visits (in some weeks I went four times, and the problem was still unfixed; the specialist's trial and error method does not always work), I dared to complain to the mechanic, hinting very cautiously and diplomatically that perhaps he ought to be a little more insistent on finding the cause of the problem and a little more effective in the diagnosis and treatment. He got my hint, and then he said somewhat annoyed "don't you think that there is a difference between the health of an 18-year-old and a 70-year-old?" He is absolutely right.

Imagine a society the majority of whose population is older than 50 years. What kind of performance do you expect from it? The fact that so many people in our part of the world own so many old cars is sad. There is so much

waste of effort, time, money and national resources. I would not rule out also the role the condition of the car plays in car accidents, which are on the rise.

Clearly, something ought to be done. And presently, there seems to be only one choice (i.e. since we do not manufacture cars ourselves); namely, to reduce the custom fees.

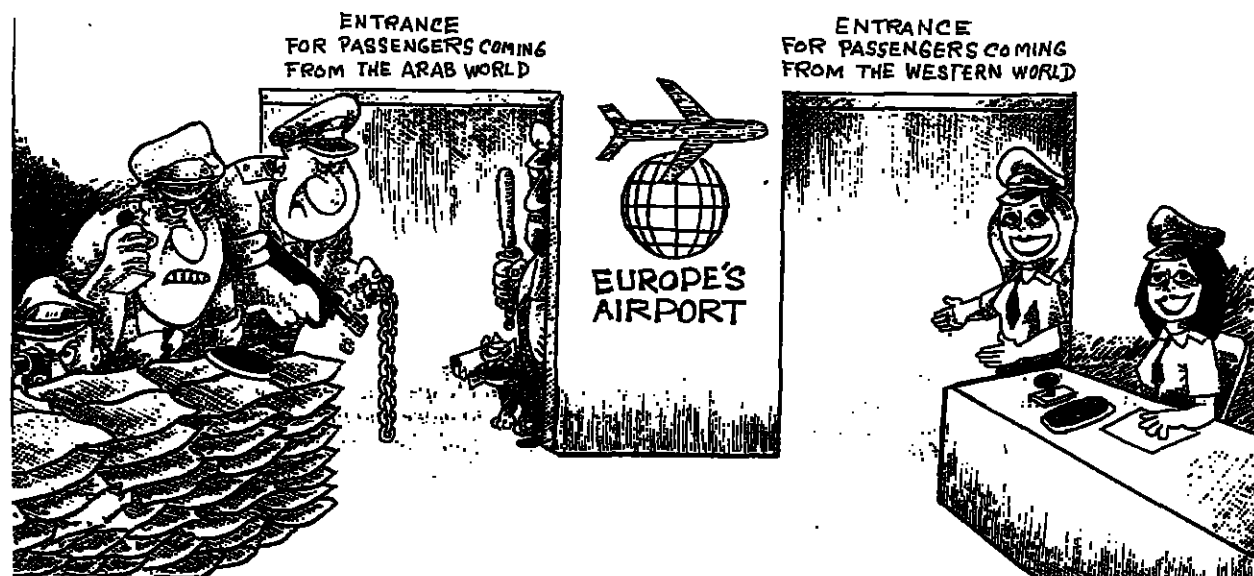
Due to custom fees, the price of a brand new car in our part of the world is simply outrageous, and (consequently) so is that of a used car. We are aware, of course, that much of the fee is necessary; it is a vital source of income to a country which does not have many other sources of income. Fine, but let the fee be a little more reasonable. Let's do some real and fair cost-benefit analysis here. Isn't the time of the citizen, his effort, physical and psychological health important? Isn't the money he wastes important? Isn't the environment important?

We appreciate the decision taken by the government some time ago to reduce custom fees on cars. However, such reduction has proved to be quite insignificant. What we need now (and quite soon) is a more substantial reduction, one which will enable us to have healthier, better and more robust cars on our roads.

Notice that we are asking here for a significant reduction, not a total elimination, of custom fees, for we do recognise the value of such fees for the economic health of the country. And I am sure that our planners, economists and tax experts are creative enough to find other ways of earning money for the national budget to compensate for whatever we chop of the custom fees.

A speedy decision needs to be taken to make life a little more comfortable and to remedy the deteriorating situation on the road. The concerned authorities have procrastinated and beaten around the bush a little too much, and they have killed us with anxiety and suspense. Time to be less dramatic and more merciful and realistic.

M. KAHIL



We're fixing the U.N.

By Bontros Ghali

AT A time when national budgets are shrinking and citizens worldwide are tightening their belts, the United Nations must become leaner, more focused and more efficient. As the world comes to terms with the changes brought about by the end of the cold war, the United Nations must also adapt itself to a new role and to new needs.

The problems that confront the United Nations are also a challenge for the member states that make up the United Nations and the peoples of the world whom the organisation serves. In these changed circumstances, there is a pressing need for governments and public opinion to decide what they want the United Nations to be, what they want it to do and what they are willing to contribute to make it work. In a recent article, Sen. Nancy Landon Kassebaum and Rep. Lee Hamilton opened a public dialogue that is of great importance to the United Nations and to its mission ("Fix the U.N.", Washington Post, op-ed, June 25).

The Lessons of Somalia and Bosnia require a harder look at managing some of the tasks now being assigned to peacekeepers. In a recent report to the Security Council on the U.N. operation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I emphasised that a peacekeeping force was not a combat force. I counselled against the temptation to mix elements of peacekeeping with those of peace-enforcement. I suggested that if member states desired peace-enforcement, then a multinational force outside the United Nations was the best way to manage such an operation.

Nonetheless, the fact is that most U.N. peacekeeping operations have been successful. All have been cost-effective in the sense of having prevented more costly wars.

Some observers are questioning the usefulness and cost of the recent continuum of U.N. global conferences, the facts rebut these concerns. The Kassebaum-Hamilton article, for example, alleged that "the recent social summit in Copenhagen may have cost \$60 million." In fact, the total assessed cost to member states for the Copenhagen conference was just \$2.4 million. Indeed, member states formally commended the secretariat for its cost-effective management of the process.

Through these global conferences which are linked attention is focused on current issues of great importance. In Vienna in 1993, the world focused attention on human rights — mobilising support and consolidating such important principles as the universal applicability of basic human rights standards. This year the world will meet to consider global concerns affecting women. In the future, perhaps a global conference might focus on challenges of democratisation.

To better pursue the major tasks of peacekeeping, human rights, humanitarian assistance and more integrated organisation is needed. When I took office as secretary general, I sharply cut the number of offices and departments. I made a commitment to bring more women into positions of high responsibility. I took steps to reduce overlap and duplication. Now, in the key areas of staffing, cost-cutting, financial controls and the curtailment of abuses, significant

progress is being made.

Today, the organisation is heading in a new direction. But there remains much to do.

First, to cut the U.N. bureaucracy, I have proposed a further net reduction of 135 secretariat posts, eliminating 201 existing ones. In order to strengthen key fields of growing responsibility, 66 posts, are to be created to increase the organisation's effectiveness in areas such as drug control, crime prevention, human rights and peacekeeping.

Second, already the regular budget has been cut nearly to a no-growth basis. Efficiency gains will bring more than \$35 million in savings to the regular budget during the 1996-1997 biennium.

Third, added emphasis will be given to oversight and inspection. The internal audits will be greatly expanded. Regulations to protect "whistleblowers" have been put in place, and people are taking advantage of them. The newly created Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) will carry out increased inspections, with full independence and without interference.

Fourth, decisive action is being taken to deal effectively with abuses. Internal justice procedures are being strengthened and streamlined. Where there is financial wrongdoing, special emphasis is now being placed on the recovery of funds from those responsible. And it is my intention that in cases of financial wrongdoing within the organisation, criminal referral should now be the rule, not the exception.

Fifth, urgent attention is needed to improve the organisation's dangerous

financial position. The United Nations is bankrupt. Cash resources do not meet either current needs or current obligations. As of the end of May 1995, member states owed \$2.754 billion in assessments not paid. The United States — the largest debtor-owned the organisation \$1.179 billion.

The organisation's excessive dependence on the assessments from a single member state is unhealthy. Its deteriorating finances reflect the low priority given to the United Nations among the political and budgetary priorities of many member states. A more even distribution of assessments among countries with the capacity to pay would be in the best interests of the organisation and the international community as a whole. It should be undertaken without delay.

Sixth, new emphasis will be placed on improving the organisation's operations in the economic and social sectors. Development efforts must find a new level of coherence and be given a new direction. For the United Nations, we must identify, and focus on, what the United Nations can do best.

The United Nations is the only machinery we have for collective cooperation among all nations. It is the only global tool for promoting peace and security, furthering development, protecting human rights and strengthening international law. These goals are worth pursuing. Let us work together to make sure that the United Nations is up to the job.

The writer is the Secretary General of the U.N. The above article is reprinted from the Washington Post.

LETTERS

TCC doing its best

To the Editor:

IN HIS letter to the editor, "a discouraging business environment" (Jordan Times Aug. 20) Sam Mashni said business in Jordan is suffering due to the lack of proper communications infrastructure. He also said that there are no operational phone boxes at Queen Alia International Airport and that it was extremely difficult to call Jordan from the United States.

I would like to say that within all telephone systems, international call connection failures can arise from telephone traffic congestion, which is caused by over utilisation or lack of capacity in the telephone systems, faults within the lines and behaviour of call recipients.

Our telephone traffic to the U.S. is carried via 350 satellite circuits and, due to technical reasons, they were divided into incoming, outgoing and both way circuits although they witnessed very high traffic in both directions. But if the telephone connection was not possible from the U.S. to Jordan, then the problem was with U.S. lines and not with lines in Jordan.

It is a fact that the existing telecommunication system in Jordan is fully utilised and over 90 per cent of the lines are in use at peak hours, a very high percentage compared with countries with more developed telephone systems. This system has not received sufficient investment to allow for essential expansion of high quality development since 1987.

We are currently undertaking urgent ongoing projects to improve the telecommunication network in Jordan. These include the construction of an integrated digital national and international exchange, which was recently put into service. This exchange will allow our traffic to run more smoothly. Replacement of an earth station in Baqaa, construction of local digital exchange in Tia' Ali with a capacity of 33000 lines, development of the Madraq Governorate digital local exchange, development of rural communications in southern Jordan are other projects which will help improve telecommunications services in the Kingdom.

Payphone facilities:

There are just over 1200 payphones in operation. Only local and national calls can be made and are not used. Problems with vandalism and spare parts have reduced the availability of this service.

We have had various complaints in the past about payphones located within the Queen Alia International Airport. Practical steps have been taken to ensure that these phones work properly. Daily checks are carried out. But despite warning posters fixed to the payphones, which read "use old Jordanian coins for your communications," it is noticed that many users still try to use new coins which are not suitable to operate these payphones.

Eng. Walid Dweik,
 Director General,
 TCC,
 Amman

Individual views

To the Editor:

REFERENCE is made to the article "Eritreans insist they are not Arabs" (Jordan Times July 25).

The views expressed in the article are those of the individual quoted, who is not a representative of the 150-170 Eritreans living in Amman.

The Eritrean community in Amman does not endorse those view.

Mr. Y. Amannell,
 Chairwoman,
 Eritrean Community in
 Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.



SOCIETY ON THE MOVE

Ministers vs. diplomats: New game in town?

There is some controversy regarding a recent action by the Council of Ministers on a recommendation by Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti to appoint Ambassador Hassan Abu Nimeh as Jordan's head of mission to the U.N. in New York, following the retirement last month of Mr. Adnan Abu Odeh. Whether the council refused to accept the proposal, as some have said, or is going to approve the recommendation, is a matter of time as it seems they have deferred taking a decision, pending the prime minister's return from Oman. And while the Council is pondering the ruling, there are some things to consider regarding juggling postings. If the refusal comes through, there will be doubt cast on the rest of the senior Foreign Ministry appointments which were to have been finalised by now. Had the appointment of able Ambassador Abu Nimeh been approved by the ministerial session on Tuesday, there would have been no need to reshuffle the cards of appointments that have been long in the making. The grounds for turning down Mr. Abu Nimeh's selection for the New York post would be that he has been serving abroad for much too long, without getting any break from successive ambassadorial posts to serve at home. On the strength of that reasoning alone, Ambassador Abu Nimeh would now be considered as the top contender for occupying the secretary-general job, which is being vacated by Mr. Nayef Al Hadid, who has been appointed to become ambassador to Morocco. It seems that none of our senior ministry officials wants that job, since our ambassadors feel it more natural to serve abroad. The job has been offered to Khaled Madadhah, our envoy to Brussels, it is said, but he too reportedly turned it down, preferring to stay where he is. But if Mr. Madadhah is somehow persuaded, with the aid of course of the new incentive that he would be serving as the "political" secretary general rather than having to do administrative work as well, Mr. Abu Nimeh could still be considered for the post in New York or in another posting in Europe, where he has been serving for over a decade, first in Brussels and then in Rome. In theory these posers will not affect the rest of ambassadorial appointments that have been cooking on a slow fire since Mr. Kabariti has taken over as foreign minister. But it is not as simple as that. Hussein Hamami, who is being replaced by Mr. Hadid as ambassador to Morocco, will presumably want to be compensated with a post somewhere in Europe. Mr. Hamami, another able career diplomat who had served both as ambassador in Washington and secretary general, might get either Bern, which has been left vacant by the departure of Ambassador Mohammad Saeed Abu Nowar after only several months on the job, or Bonn, which is being forsaken by Ambassador Samir Khalifeh in favour of taking up the vacancy in Canada, or Brussels. Because of Nabil Talhouni's confirmed appointment as envoy to the United Arab Emirates (UAE), former chief of the air force Mohammad Kodah is tipped to go to Oman. Mr. Talhouni had served as chief of the political department, just before Abdullah Madadhah, Khaled Madadhah's younger brother, took over the spot. Now the first-time Ambassador Madadhah is tipped to become envoy to Jordan's U.N. mission in Geneva. He would be succeeding Sharif Fawaz Sharif, who is moving to Paris to take over from Mutassem Bilbeisi, who is retiring at his own request. Meanwhile, Ahmad Mbadid, who was head of the information department at the ministry, is going to Tripoli, Libya as ambassador, while another career diplomat, Mohammad Khair Mighel will go to Algeria. Ministry sources say that depending on the outcome of the dilemma over Mr. Abu Nimeh, it will be decided whether the government will again ask Avn Khasawneh, the King's legal advisor, to serve as ambassador, this time to the U.N. in New York. Mr. Khasawneh was offered to head the mission in Geneva before the last Cabinet change in January but had turned it down,

apparently in anticipation of a ministerial portfolio. When this did not happen, however, he was appointed legal advisor to His Majesty the King with the rank of minister. The big question mark remaining is over whether Nassouh Majali, who has returned from Ottawa, will be sent to Syria as ambassador to replace the late Ahmad Adayleh who died while in office. This might depend more in fact on the Syrians than us since Damascus has still not decided on replacing its former ambassador in Amman with a new envoy.



Adnan Abu Odeh

Research, paper and a book: Mr. Adnan Abu Odeh will leave for the U.S. on Saturday to take up his one-year fellowship at the Washington-based Peace Institute. During the coming year, Mr. Abu Odeh, a former chief of the Royal Court and before that minister of information, will be writing a paper on the dynamics of Jordanian-Palestinian relations over the years, having spent the last 40 days interviewing political figures in Jordan, Gaza and Jerusalem. Mr. Abu Odeh, whose last job was the head of the Jordanian mission to the U.N. in New York (which he did for the past three years), may eventually develop his paper into a book. For now, however, one has to be content with research, writing and giving lectures when possible, he says. Bigger projects have to wait.

Some come, some go: The Rome-based Orbit Satellite Television and Radio Network has announced the appointment of Mr. Zeid Fariz to the position of general manager of Al Thania, Orbit's Arabic language family channel. Mr. Fariz had, until recently, been assistant director general of Jordan Radio and Television Corporation (JRTC) and director of the Jordan Satellite Television, which joined the Orbit channels this month. Mr. Fariz can boast a sea of experience in the field of programming and production, having directed series,

documentaries and variety programmes and having held the position of general manager of production at the Jordan studios. He was the executive producer and director of the highly acclaimed educational series Al Manahel, the Arabic licensed version of The Electric Company. In his new position, Mr. Fariz will be responsible for the day-to-day operations of the channel, managing all aspects of programming, production, scheduling and staffing, as well as liaising with Orbit Productions which is active in creating Arabic language programming throughout the Middle East and North Africa. As head of the JRTC Ihsan Ramzi was "snatched" from the Middle East Broadcasting Corporation (MBC) where he was director of programming, the balance seems to have been somehow redressed. Some come, some go...

Back after slip: The French ambassador, Bernard Bajonet, will return to Amman this weekend, having had time enough to recover from a slip of the tongue last July. As members of the French and diplomatic community celebrated Bastille Day (July 14), the ambassador asked his guests to raise their glasses and toast French President Francois Mitterrand. Too late, the word was out. Jacques Chirac had been elected president two months earlier.

French connection on the go: It may be coincidental that the French connection lasted throughout July, when mixed teams from the Australian and British embassies challenged each other to a cricket match. True to form, the Ozies licked the Poms. Defeat taken well, the die-hards called for another match. Their opponents this time were the French—a side not known for their cricketer prowess. But it can be said that all is fair in love and war.

Move to hotter place: And if the French ambassador is back to post, First Secretary at the embassy of Pakistan Shaukat Ali Mukadam has finished his tour of duty and is preparing to leave Jordan for Baghdad. Mr. Mukadam, who studied at the American University in Cairo and in Toulon, France, came to the Kingdom in September 1992 from Cairo. Before that, and upon completing training at the Foreign Service Training Institute in Islamabad, Mr. Mukadam worked at various political desks in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and was responsible for the south Asia and Africa region. The diplomat says that the three years he has spent in Jordan "have been one of the most exciting periods of my career", with the Kingdom making peace with Israel and all the dynamic events preceding and following the event. "Besides the professional experience, which I have gained in Jordan, another important aspect is the large number of friends which I managed to make and the friendly attitude of our Jordanian brethren and the warmth and affection which we received from officials and personal friends, will indeed leave an indelible mark on myself and my family," he says. Declaring himself "pleasantly surprised" by the green and clean country which he had expected to be rather "dry and arid," Mr. Mukadam says "Jordan is indeed a translation of achievements of His Majesty King Hussein and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan." And to add to the good impression the country and its people left on Mr. Mukadam, two more events made his "stay in Jordan memorable." Mr. Mukadam's brother married a Jordanian and of his three children (a boy and two girls) his daughter Noor was born in Amman. We wish Mr. Mukadam the best of luck in his future endeavours and welcome his replacement Ziad Khan to Jordan.

Altruism shows: A nice letter came to the Jordan Times three days ago from Carola Welch, a lady from Germany who will be in the Kingdom for the duration of the next month. She comes for medical treatment at the Dead Sea spa and as her daughter's birthday falls in the middle of September, she says: "Since I cannot celebrate with my family, I would like to spend the afternoon in a refugee camp or with a needy family." Mrs. Welch will bring children's clothes and toys as well as medicine that she would like to donate to "a doctor working in an infirmary or a camp where it would be needed." It always feels good to find altruistic people in this materialistic world. We wish Mrs. Welch good health and a nice stay in Jordan.

While humour lasts: And, keeping the postman busy, a stream of letters pours into our newsroom. Some full of praise, others of criticism, some serious, others funny. We will let you be the judge of the following one. In a letter to the editor the Jordan Times published on Aug. 26, the writer humorously suggested we use carrier pigeons for "rapid communication" as a way of making up for our shortcomings in the postal and telecommunications services. Andrew Rosemarine, of Amman, taking the proposal perhaps a shade too seriously, wrote to us an immediate reply. He wrote:

"A letter to the editor yesterday suggested the government adopt messenger pigeons to remedy a chronic lack of telephone lines in Amman. 'These friendly birds', he (the author of the first letter) wrote, 'are pollution free'. He has obviously never been dive-bombed as I have, with white blotches on my hair and clothes as ample testimony of their 'friendliness'. These messengers have also painted vast areas of European capitals with their messages. Does the writer want Amman to fall victim to the same marauding army?"

A more practical solution would be singing telegrams. They might be more expensive, but there would be no risk of their being intercepted by somebody looking for a cheap lunch."

Editors might be nonplussed. Readers, on the other hand, might want to come up with some solutions too. We are looking forward to receiving all and any original proposals we can get.

Only boys return: Shell-shocked and fresh looking, five male British school-leavers have joined the exar scene. Their objective is charitable. The lads were chosen by Project Trust, and England-based organisation, to participate in voluntary projects here. Three will be working in Fuhels, at a school for the mentally handicapped, while the other two will be at the Theodore Schneller orphanage near Marka. Coordinator Neville O'Grady attributed the absence of girls to a rumour he inherited from his predecessor. It appears that once a female volunteer became enamoured with a Bedouin she encountered in Wadi Rum. Some days later, the story says, the man's father arrived at the school in Fuhels to retrieve his son's bride. Project Trust began operations here 14 years ago, but they were suspended for four years following the Gulf crisis.

Ica Wahbeh

Jennifer Hamarneh is on leave. Cathy King contributed to this week's SOM.

In Shakespeare's Globe his shade seems close at hand

By Graham Heathcote
The Associated Press

LONDON — It had to be a breeze waiting open the doors back of stage at William Shakespeare's Globe.

The arched doors gaped — and then closed just as silently, and there was no one there. A breeze right?

But who wouldn't want to believe the shade of the bard himself was at hand on the south bank of the River Thames, where the Globe Theatre is being recreated after 400 years?

Mark Rylance, the theatre's first artistic director, seized his chance in front of some 800 people on Saturday during his first workshop on the bare and makeshift stage.

"There are a lot of spirits behind me," he told his audience as the open doors revealed a vista of scaffolding poles for the theatre, which is still being built.

Shouts of acclamation, joy and laughter came from the common folk on the promenade below him who had paid £5 for a place to sit — or, more likely, stand —

under the open sky. In Shakespeare's day they paid one penny and were known as penny stinkards.

The better off paid £11 — 2 pennies in the bard's time — for a wooden seat in one of the three galleries below the thatched roof.

The New Globe, that impossible dream of the late American actor-director Sam Wanamaker, is coming true. With 10 months to go before the official opening on Wanamaker's birthday, June 14, 1996, hundreds of people are visiting everyday for tours, an exhibition about

Shakespeare and his times and, since Aug. 9 through Sept. 10, to take part in workshops exploring the acoustics, atmosphere and the famous plays.

Mr. Rylance, 35, an actor and stage company director, wearing a coloured shirt over blue trunks, handed out the script of Scene 2 in Act 4 of Shakespeare's "Macbeth," inviting his audience to consider the character of Lady Macduff, wife of the Thane of Fife who eventually kills Macbeth.

The audience called out

what they deduced from the dialogue: Intelligent, witty, compassionate, titled, lives in fife in a castle or mansion, has been deserted by her husband and knows a lot about birds.

For the lady compares her departed spouse unfavourably to the little wren, smallest of birds, which fights to protect "her young ones in her nest, against the owle."

Mr. Rylance again and again compelled his audience to understand more by reading and rereading the 128 spoken lines.

Then grownups and chil-

dren went onstage to imagine themselves as Lady Macduff and to perform the lines with a prompter's help.

"I feel the energy coming from you," Mr. Rylance told them.

One woman called out that when the Globe is fully up and running the actors will have to think more about how they can be seen.

Too often from her seat in a side gallery, they were obscured by one of the two columns known as the pillars of Hercules, which hold up the roof over the thrust stage.

Afterward, Mr. Rylance

said in an interview: "I liked the interplay between us. There's a sense that we are all explorers in this globe. There is a lot to learn here about the relation of the actors to the building and to the audience, and American academics who are coming say they want authentic pronunciation."

"I feel the good guys have made something happen here," said Jonathan Taylor, a New Yorker living in London who's a steward at the theatre.

"It's an overwhelming, exciting place," said Susan Pel-

lowe, visiting from Chicago, which started the first American support group to raise money to build the new theatre.

David Chamberlin, 18, from Hanover, N.H., "looking around Europe" before studying acting, said: "There's so much life and history. Something has been missing from theatre for a long time and now you can actually feel that you are part of it, part of the play."

He picked up his knapsack and strolled out into the alleys of Southwark.

New Shakespeare exhibit seeks to silence myths

Lyndsay Griffiths
Reuters

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON, England — Was he the greatest writer of all time or a literary fraud who was mean with money, greedy with drink and a womaniser?

A new exhibition at William Shakespeare's birthplace seeks to set the record straight, guiding visitors through the writer's school days onto acting acclaim in London and back to retirement in Stratford's grandest house.

It is a tale of an ordinary English boy who married a local girl, made good in London and died a rich man back home.

In short, there is no dirt — or none that can be proved.

"People do look for the negative side. But there's no evidence that he didn't

write the plays as some people claim, in fact, there's nothing really nasty about him that is known for sure," said David Howells of the Shakespeare Centre.

The nasty myths still make for enticing reading. Did the revered bard and playwright really die after a ferocious drinking bout? Was he penny-pinching with friends, unfaithful to his older wife? And how about his zest for property development, a prosecution for deer poaching...

"People love reading things into Shakespeare, but we're really here to paint an honest portrait," said Howells.

According to that portrait, Shakespeare was born in April 1564, one of eight children in the central English market town of Stratford, now one of Britain's top 10 tourist

centres.

The son of an ambitious glove merchant, the young Shakespeare appeared to develop an interest in theatre when troupes of visiting players circulated through town.

In 1582, he married Anne Hathaway. He was 18, she was 26.

"And yes, she was already three months pregnant. But people are people — whatever the time," said Howells.

A decade later, the first reference surfaced of Shakespeare moving to the capital, where he became a serious businessman, property owner and theatrical shareholder.

He also wrote and acted in some of plays.

His company found success, was taken under the patronage of James I and became known as the king's men.

When Shakespeare re-

turned to Stratford, he bought the biggest house in town. Local records show "William Shakespeare (sic), gent" was 52 when he died in 1616, leaving no male heir.

Seven years later, the first collection of his plays went on sale for a pound (£1.60) and now sits in the Stratford display.

"It has been called the most important book in the English language," said Howells.

Yet the exhibit has few personal belongings — no letters, diaries or manuscripts have been found — and relies mainly on artefacts from the era to evoke the man's life and times.

"It is still the first permanent, panoramic biographical history of Shakespeare," said Sir Roy Strong, an authority on Shakespeare. "It's about opening doors to a

world that is increasingly remote, which is not the same as seeing his plays once the director has finished fiddling around."

But what of the man himself: what was he really like?

"People are curious. But the idea that we know practically nothing about the man only fuels these mad myths. We are trying with this exhibit to put flesh on the skeletal facts," said Roger Pringle, director of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.

Mr. Pringle says the new exhibit — which augments five houses connected to Shakespeare that he already runs — has used facts and facts alone to paint a picture of the man and his times.

"We made nothing of the story that he died after a great booze-up. This fabulous drinking bout is

anecdotal. It's graphic but we jettisoned it for the hard facts," said Mr. Pringle.

"It's also easy to think that Shakespeare had his flings if you treat the sonnets in any way as autobiographical. There is a theory that he had a passionate affair with a so-called dark lady but nothing is known for certain," he added.

"Then people seize on the fact he bequeathed his second best bed to his wife as proof of a sleight. Quite the opposite — it was probably a very romantic touch as it was the bed they used. The best one was probably in the guest room," said Mr. Pringle.

In fact, the exhibit deliberately sets out to debunk the central, most enduring "myth" — that Shakespeare didn't write Shakespeare's plays — by dwelling on his erudite

schooling and re-creating a writerly study to disarm those critics who say Shakespeare was too ill-educated to write such learned work.

Mr. Pringle nonetheless denies any whitewash.

"There have been periods in history where people have been over-protective about

Shakespeare's reputation, but we certainly don't do that today," he said.

"In fact we tend to do down our heroes, and this despite the fact that Shakespeare remains an extraordinary world phenomenon who is loved, performed and translated in practically every corner of the world."

Thoughts for this week

The time will come when winter will ask us: What were you doing all the summer? — Bohemian proverb.

Very few men are wise by their own counsel; or learned by their own teaching. For he that was only taught by himself, had a fool to his master — Ben Jonson, English dramatist and poet (1572-1637).

Time is the thief you cannot banish — Phyllis McGinley, American poet and author (1905-1978).

No one worth possessing can be quite possessed — Sara Teasdale, American author and poet (1884-1933).

Empty shelves

By Jean-Claude Elias

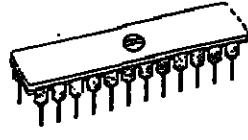
Among all the discs that have helped promote the CD-ROM (laser disc drive and player for computers) since 1993 and have given it the huge popularity it now enjoys, encyclopedias win with flying colours.

Two such programmes have made their way to millions of homes in the world — Microsoft Encarta and the Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia. Well designed, extremely attractive to operate with their catchy graphics, colours and quality sound and music, these CDs are enjoyed by children and adults alike. Fun to use but also useful, Encarta and the Grolier have become a must for anyone who owns a CD-ROM drive.

In spite of all their features, qualities and a price tag difficult to resist (they sell for less than \$100 each), they both have a serious limitation for any grown-up embarking on professional research or writing — the amount of data they hold is far less than well-established standards like the Americana and Britannica volumes. For certain groups of age watching and hearing an excerpt of a John Kennedy speech on the Grolier may be great and even instructive to a limited extent, but for someone who wishes to consult an encyclopedia and be sure to find any entry he or she has in mind, only a reference, classic work will do.

The respectable Britannica and Americana have just been released on CD-ROM. An event that many have been expected ever since the first CD-ROM was released. The full, unabridged versions are now available in electronic form. Though less expensive than the hard copy product, which sales anyway have

chip talk



regularly decreased during the past 12 months according to the publishers. Britannica and Americana CDs are in the \$600 to \$800 bracket. They are not meant as competitors to Encarta and Grolier.

With the obvious advantage of the electronic search and print over the hard copy versions, Britannica and Americana are text-only products. They are not launched as multi-media products — they do not have any sound, music and or drawing capability. Their publishers evidently are targeting the "serious" customer, although it is reasonable to expect future versions to integrate maps and photographs at least, if not sound.

The Americana has 45,000 articles and 25 million words. The Britannica, which also features a complete dictionary, has 65,000 articles and 44 million words. In comparison, the Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia has 33,000 articles and 10 million words. It's time to dust off the shelves of your book case and think of something to put on the ones left free once you buy the 20 grammes (approximate weight of a CD) Americana or Britannica and give away the good old books.

Get a life

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaeen

I have to admit that I found the catch phrase quite interesting and irresistible. The advertisement read "Get a life. Not just a degree". This was, of course, an advertisement in a British newspaper for a British university.

There will probably come a point when we also will just have to accept that a strong vocational bias is not the only thing that university students should be looking for. Attitudes, the atmosphere and environment also matter. And while students should take note of the courses that they generally apply for, they should also realise that one of the differences between being at school and at university is that they will have to be self-motivated. Tutors, it is also worth noting, want to give the impression that students read for themselves, that they read books and newspapers, they aren't just drilled in their set book. Motivation and knowledge about a subject and the university are what normally impress a tutor most. Another advertisement in the same newspaper went even further to say that the degree at the university comes with chopsticks, drumsticks, salt-n-pepa, deuce, and a pepperoni pizza with an olive on top. All of this was written just to point out the Chinese supermarket, the wicked Italian deli, and the tennis and squash courts near or on campus.

All this is, of course, very well if you truly get to choose a university you think can offer you exactly what you are looking for, and whether you have the kind of motivation that a university looks for in prospective candidates. But, taking into account our present situation, is there a point to taking this train of thought any further?

On the other hand, one good thing to have come out of the past week has been a very interesting essay in Time magazine entitled: The evolution of despair.

Apparently, evolutionary psychology is the new field of science which examines the mismatch between the genetic makeup of mankind and the modern world, looking for humanity's pervasive sense of discontent and the erosion of civility within the society. For when sadness lingers on into debilitating depression and when anxiety grows chronic and paralyzing, is it modernism at fault or is it something to do with the human mind? The human mind certainly evolved in an environment lacking not only cellular phones, but even regular phones, and cars, trains and even horse drawn carriages. Amidst all of this, the kinder and gentler side of human nature has increasingly become a victim of repression. Too little of our "social" contact nowadays is social in the natural and intimate sense of the word.

Urbanisation, and later on suburbanisation, were most certainly two processes that ushered in modern ills. Much of our trouble, it can be argued, stem from technology. Suburbs, for one, are largely a product of cars. Technology — the telephone, the refrigerator and ready-made, microwavable meals — has also eroded the bonds of neighbourly interdependence. Also, thanks to electric garage-door openers, these days anyone can drive straight into their house without risking contact with a neighbour. Even so, technology has had its rewards.

To fight off the shortage of civility in modern day civilisation, planners and architects have to account implicitly for human nature. Neighbourhoods have to be designed with large common recreational spaces, extensive pedestrian pathways, and even parking spaces that make it hard to hop from car to living room without crossing some turf in between.

Admittedly, we cannot bring back the extended kin networks that our ancestors once enjoyed, but we owe it to our children to at least try. Really try!

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

AMAZING FACTS

★ The shortest time recorded for the amputation of a leg in the pre-anesthetic era was 13 to 15 seconds by Napoleon's chief surgeon, Dominique Larrey.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ Mrs. D.G. Knutzen of Whittier, California, reported in January 1977 a lemon with a circumference of 28½ inches, weighing 6 lbs 4 oz.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ The largest gulf in the world is the Gulf of Mexico with a shoreline of 3,100 miles from Cape Sable, Florida, to Cabo Catoche, Mexico. Its area is 580,000 square miles.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ Jack Sholomir of Britain blew a flame from his mouth to a distance of 23 feet at the Eardisley and District Royal Legion Stampede at Kinnerley, Hereford and Worcester, England on June 6, 1977.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ Mrs. Jean Chapman successively extinguished 1,921 flaming torches with her mouth in 120 minutes on October 29, 1977 in Stokes Poges, Buckinghamshire, England. Fire-eating is potentially a highly dangerous activity.

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

— Try to understand me. *Haawell an taf'hamani.*
— May I come in? *Hal tasupah lee bid-dokhooh?*
— I mean it. *Aanee na aqool.*
— We are all mixed up. *Enna'na muhtaroon jiddan.*
— I didn't know the truth. *Lam akon aariful haqiqa.*
— You should stop this bad habit at once. *Yajeb an tuqli' an haathehil aada fil-hal.*
— If so, what are you going to do, my dear? *Law kanal amru kathalek, matha asaka an taf'al ya azzil.*
— I'll let him have it, hot and strong. *Sawfa oreche nujoomad'dohr.*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

RIPPLES



★ Man and wife were looking at some pictures at one of the art exhibits. The wife had a weak eye sight. She stood staring at a piece hung on the wall, then whispered in her husband's ear.
"This is the ugliest picture I've ever seen."
Taking her aside, the husband said: "This is not a picture, my dear. It's a mirror!"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

★ WIFE (to her sleeping husband): Latif, Latif, there's a mouse in the room!"
HUSBAND (furiously): "Do you think I'm a cat?"

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

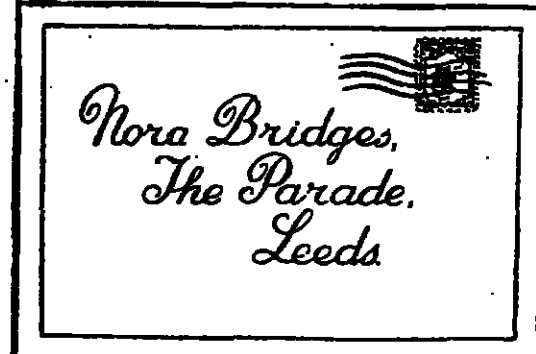
IN FOCUS

The Komodo dragon

- World's largest lizard
- Discovered in 1912 on Komodo and adjacent Indonesian islands
- Feeds on wild pigs and deer
- May reach 10 ft in length
- Has on each flank a broad wing
- Found also in the East Indies

PUZZLES

A doggy problem



The letters making the address on this envelope also make the names of three kinds of dog. There are exactly the number of letters to make the three names, and each letter must be used once only.

JTV CHANNEL 2 WEEKLY PREVIEW

Thursday, Aug. 31

1:00 Iris-The Happy Professor
1:15 Fireman Sam
1:50 My Secret Identity
2:15 N.B.A.
3:30 Take Your Pick
4:00 Dead Men's Tales
4:30 I Witness Video
5:00 Children's Programme Rahan
5:30 Varieties And Game Show
7:00 Le Journal
7:15 Magazine
7:30 News Headlines
7:35 National Geographic
8:30 The Album Show
9:15 Murder She Wrote
10:00 News In English
10:25 Movie
12:00 Shogun — Part Nine

Friday, Sept. 1

1:00 Read-A-Alle Deed-A-Alle
1:15 Beethoven
1:30 Why I didn't Think Of That
2:00 Key To Freedom: Women & Literature
2:30 Movie — The Enter-tainers
Starring: Linda Gray
4:00 The Crystal Maze
5:00 Children's Programme Rahan
5:30 Telefilm
7:00 Le Journal
7:15 Magazine — E=M6
7:30 News Headlines
7:35 African Skies
8:00 Coach
8:30 Nomads Of The Wind

9:15 Dangerfield

10:00 News In English
10:25 Movie — Calamity Jane
Starring: Jane Alexander & Frederick Forest
11:50 Out On A Limb
12:30 The Powers That Be
Saturday, Sept. 2
2:00 Back To The Future
2:50 Harry And The Hendersons
3:00 Road To Avonlea
3:30 Only In Hollywood
4:00 Families
5:00 Children's Programme Rahan
5:30 Documentary — Le Bicentenaire Du Louvre
6:00 Drama Series — Operation Open 1 et 2
7:00 Le Journal
7:15 Magazine — Faut Pas Rever

7:30 News Headlines

7:35 Documentary — Conceiving The Future
8:00 Major Dad
8:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
9:15 Dr. Quinn-Medicine Woman
10:00 News In English
10:25 Shadows Of The Heart
12:00 The Noble House
Sunday, Sept. 3
2:00 The Flintstones
2:30 The Mighty Jungle
3:00 Pugwall's Summer
3:30 Time Riders
4:00 Families
5:00 Children's Programme Rahan
5:30 Telefilm — Le Jap
7:00 Le Journal
7:15 Ushuaia: Le Maga-

zine De L'Extreme

7:30 News Headlines
7:35 Cinema, Cinema
8:00 Nurses
8:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
9:15 Strathblair
10:00 News In English
10:25 Shadows Of The Heart
12:00 Return To Eden
12:30 Keeping Up Appearances
Monday, Sept. 4
2:00 The Animals Of Farthing Wood
2:30 Hey Dad!
3:00 Survival
4:00 Families
5:00 Children's Programme Rahan
5:30 Telefilm — Francois Le Champi
7:00 Le Journal

7:15 French Varieties

7:30 News Headlines
7:35 Documentary — An End To Silence
8:00 McHale's Navy
8:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
9:15 Harts Of The West
10:00 News In English
10:25 The Ruth Rendell's Mysteries
Kissing The Gunner's Daughter
11:30 Movie — Apocalypse Now
Starring: Marlon Brando & Martin Sheen
Tuesday, Sept. 5
2:00 Captain Planet
2:30 M.A.N.T.I.S.
3:00 Road To Avonlea
4:00 Families
5:00 Children's Programme Rahan
5:30 Telefilm — Francois Le Champi
7:00 Le Journal

5:30 Magazine — Montagne

5:50 Varieties — Tarata
7:00 Le Journal
7:15 Magazine — Faut Pas Reve
7:30 News Headlines
7:35 U Bet Your Life
8:00 Piglet Files
8:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
9:15 Documentary — Women Of The World
9:30 Pacific Station
10:00 News In English
10:25 Russia: The Missing Years
History Of The Red Army
11:30 New York Undercover
12:00 Grace Under Fire
12:00 Varieties
Wednesday, Sept. 6
2:00 Problem Child

2:30 Super Champs

3:00 Tomorrow's World
3:30 Amazing Stories
4:00 Families
5:00 Children's Programme — Rahan
5:30 Detective Telefilm — Les Aventures De Nestor Burma
7:00 Le Journal
7:15 Ushuaia, Le Magazine De L'Extreme
7:30 News Headlines
7:35 Arthur C. Clarke's Mysterious Universe
8:00 Anything For A Laugh
8:30 The Bold And The Beautiful
9:15 Heart Of Healing
10:00 News In English
10:25 Prism
10:45 The Blue Skies
12:00 Shakazulu

From Abba to Ace of Base, Swedes find key to pop success

By Thomas Ginsberg
The Associated Press

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — In the beginning, there was Abba. Then came Europe, Roxette, Dr. Alban, Ace of Base, and now even a techno country group named Rednex.

Sweden has become a world power in pop music exports, possibly No. 3 behind the United States and Britain, according to industry estimates.

Two decades after Abba stormed world charts, similar kinds of clean-cut bands — and some racier ones — have made millions of dollars abroad, vying with Volvo as the star of Swedish exports.

"I can't even grasp this. I'm a tourist in reality," says Ace of Base founder Jonas Berggren, who feels out of place with fame and success.

The quartet from western Sweden, playing what one reviewer called "kindergarten reggae," won best new artist last year in the American music awards for "All That She Wants."

Its sound, though uni-

que, follows a pure, catchy style, including "The Final Countdown" by Europe in 1987, "Joyride" by Roxette in 1991, and now "Cotton Eye Joe" by Rednex, a studio act sounding more Texan than Swedish.

Artists and agents say Sweden's secrets are many: Free music education, an affinity for English, an obsession with American pop culture and even a penchant for singing over drinks. They credit an uncanny ear for mass-market tastes and a broader array of talent than the home market can support.

And then there's Abba, the biggest reason. The 1970s sensation got the world to notice Sweden and inspired Swedes to conquer the world.

Since 1974, when its single "Waterloo" won the Eurovision song contest, the quartet of Agneta Faltskog, Benny Andersson, Bjorn Ulvaeus and Anni-Frid Lyngstad has defined an international pop genre.

They have sold roughly 250 million albums, cassettes and CDs wor-

ldwide, not counting 10 million "Greatest Hits" compilations during a recent revival.

Two Australian films, "Priscilla Queen of the Desert" and "Muriel's Wedding," have enshrined Abba as a pop culture icon. On the Internet, a half-dozen sites are devoted to Swedish pop music, most of them solely to Abba.

"The international recording industry turned its attention to Sweden after Abba, and they realised there was a huge source of good music," says Marie Dinberg, Swedish spokeswoman for EMI, the U.S.-based label.

Lasse Lindstrom, music for Sweden's biggest daily, Expressen, says, "It's not like audiences in America are screaming for new Swedish pop music, but the record companies do, because they see the potential."

U.S. and European labels flocked to Sweden and seized on bands even if spurned by fickle Swedes, starting with the soft heavy-metal sound of Europe in the late 1980s. Today, MTV has cre-



The Swedish pop group, Abba

ated a niche for good-looking, off-beat acts, opening the door for groups like Army of Lovers, whose provocative video "Crucified" entranced viewers in 1993.

Others range from rave to soul artists such as Stakka Bo, E-type, Eric Gadd, Cardigans, Clawfinger,

Atomic Swing and Whale. Many of these groups are rebelling against Sweden's soft rock image.

"For the size of the country and the number of bands that we play on MTV Europe, (Sweden) far outweighs any other country," says MTV Europe's Vice President

Richard Godfrey.

Billboard Magazine's international deputy editor, Thom Duffy, credits Sweden's "pop sensibility."

"It's the ability to convey a simple emotion in a three-minute song with a melody and a hook that transcends borders." While there are no hard

figures comparing music exports by country, Sweden, which has a population of 8.5 million, does sell far more pop than it buys, says Gunnar Petri of the artists' rights society STIM.

"It is really remarkable that a country with Sweden's population would be a net exporter of music," Mr. Petri says.

Inspired by Abba, children rushed to study and hear pop music for free in schools and communal "people's parks." American television, film and music have infused Swedish culture, and English study is mandated in grade school. The combination became magical.

"We have this 'exoticism' around American culture. And that is transforming into music," says Eric Gadd, 29, a rhythm-and-blues artist billed by some as the next global star.

Although its domestic market is tiny — \$332 million last year compared with \$11.8 billion in the United States — Sweden may outsell other countries worldwide precisely because its language and

population are small. "Germany, France and Italy have great music, but a lot of them do it in their native tongue because the market is so great," says Tomas Johansson, of Ema, a talent agency. "In Sweden, if you want a bigger career, you have to do it in English."

Many artists, often urged by agents, record their hits in English as well as Swedish hoping for a hit abroad.

At home, however, the English-language pop associated with Sweden worldwide often doesn't sell. Ace of Base failed for years to get a contract, finally moving to Denmark.

"Maybe it's that we want to be tougher, better than everybody else," says Marianne Ballard, a club manager in the western Swedish town of Goteborg, where the homegrown band was ignored years ago.

Berggren, from Ace of Base, now feels vindicated.

"The Swedish critics still don't like us. They won't admit they were wrong."

Fall movies get more serious, as does handicapping

By John Horn
The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The joke is that Hollywood's fall films are more serious than summer's. Of course, they are. It's impossible to make movies dumber than Mad Love, Bushwhacked and Operation Dumbo Drop.

With kids back in school and adults buying a greater percentage of tickets, the studios will release fall titles far less calculated than summer's fare. As the level of sophistication grows, predictability turns complicated. It's a no-brainer to foretell riches for Batman Forever, but guessing whether The Scarlet Letter will be as popular as Jumanji is nearly impossible.

An informal survey of producers, theatre owners and studio executives suggests that only a few fall films are bet-the-house hits. The majority of autumn movies are much harder to predict, but here's a rundown of the likely successes, plus a slate of the season's riskier titles.

1. Ace Ventura 2: When Nature Calls (Nov. 10). Jim Carrey is even more popular than when the first Ace Ventura came out in 1994. This will probably be insipid — but that hasn't hurt a Carrey film yet. His past three movies averaged \$100 million each.

2. Get Shorty (Oct. 18). Pulp Fiction star John Travolta plays a loan shark opposite Danny DeVito in the movie version of Elmore Leonard's best-seller. Directed by Barry Sonnenfeld (The Addams Family),

Get Shorty could have a long run at ticket windows.

3. Seven (Sept. 20). Yet another murder story, Seven has the advantage of starring the popular Brad Pitt (and his girlfriend, Gwyneth Paltrow) opposite Morgan Freeman. New Line has marketed the film very well.

4. Casino (November). An all-star cast (Robert DeNiro, Sharon Stone, Joe Pesci) and a topflight director (Goodfellas' Martin Scorsese) should make this gangster movie a lock. That was supposed to be the case with 1991's Bugsy which did well but not spectacularly.

5. Nick of Time (Nov. 22). Director John Badham (Wargames) imitates Alfred Hitchcock's Rope in this real-time assassination drama: The film runs as long as the action. The one gamble: turning the very good actor Johnny Depp into an action hero.

6. Jade (Oct. 6). Joe Eszterhas (Basic Instinct) writes horrible dialogue, but his scripts almost always connect with audiences. TV star David Caruso fizzled with his first feature, Kiss Of Death, and director William Friedkin hasn't had a hit since men wore hats to the office. Still, the crime drama looks better than average.

7. Assassins (Oct. 6). Antonio Banderas (Interview With The Vampire) is actually hotter than his co-star, Sylvester Stallone, whose Judge Dredd did worse than "A Goofy Movie." Director Richard Donner (Lethal Weapon) has a golden box-office touch, so the murder story might click.

8. Showgirls (Sept. 22). The story of Las Vegas

strippers has a cast of unknowns but a high curiosity — OK, lechery — factor. Mostly naked stars Elizabeth Berkley (TV's Saved By The Bell) and Gina Gershon won't sell a lot of tickets, but director Paul Verhoeven (Basic Instinct) might.

9. The Scarlet Letter (Oct. 13). Demi Moore stars in the fifth movie version of the Nathaniel Hawthorne adultery novel. Reviewers won't like the new happy ending, but audiences probably won't mind. With Robert Duvall and Gary Oldman.

10. Sabrina (Nov. 17). As remakes go, this retelling of 1954's Bogart-Audrey Hepburn classic isn't shabby. It stars Harrison Ford and Julia Ormond. Director Sydney Pollack tends to run either very hot or ice cold, though, from Havana to The Firm.

11. The American President (Nov. 17). If the public hates politics in the movies as much as in real life, this story of a widowed President (Michael Douglas) and his love life looks like a longshot. Its advantage is Douglas, and director Ron Reiner is capable of another A Few Good Men... or another North.

12. Unstrung Heroes (Sept. 15). What sounds like a documentary about pro tennis is instead a family story directed by Diane Keaton. The cast is headed by Andie MacDowell and Seinfeld's Michael Kramer and it could be a surprise hit.

13. Home For The Holidays (Nov. 3). Jodie Foster directs and produces this family comedy-drama, with Holly Hunter, Robert Downey Jr. and Anne Ban-

croft. With good word-of-mouth, this kind of film can work — see Steel Magnolias — but it's a hard sell, especially following Unstrung Heroes.

14. Fair Game (Oct. 27). This William Baldwin-Cindy Crawford police story was supposed to debut in September and was delayed when several scenes had to be re-shot. It's the first feature role for the model, and Baldwin isn't as well-known as brother Alec.

15. Steal Big, Steal Little (Sept. 29). The Fugitive-maker Andy Davis directs Andy Garcia, who single-handedly plays two battling brothers. The downside is that the film is being released by Savoy Pictures, which would have lost money if it handled Jurassic Park.

The gambles:

1. A Vampire In Brooklyn (Oct. 27). Eddie Murphy as a vampire. A mostly sure-fire actor in a strange role.

2. Goldeneye (Nov. 17). Pierce Brosnan stars as James Bond. Could start demand for a Sean Connery comeback, but also could do \$50 million.

3. To Die For (Sept. 27). A funny, dark comedy starring Nicole Kidman as a wicked newscaster. Probably too ingenious for America.

4. Now And Then (Oct. 20). An ensemble story about four girls during those awkward teen years. Will male audiences loosen up and check it out?

5. Jumanji (Nov. 17). Robin Williams' fantasy-adventure cost more than \$60 million, and its audience is unclear.

Actor starred in war films for Japan and China

By Mark O'Neill

Reuter

BEIJING — In 1942, Yu Yang was one of the lead actors, playing a reformed orphan, in a film about the benevolence of the Japanese-led government of northeast China.

A decade later, he was still on the set — but playing opposite roles, as a Communist revolutionary soldier fighting the Japanese.

"For some reason, I was always the good guy," said Yu, 65, with a laugh in an interview at the Beijing Film Studio where he lives. "I have the features and air of a good guy."

Yu began his acting career in Japanese-occupied Manchuria and continued in films after the Japanese surrender in 1945.

The Japanese invasion changed Yu's life.

With his widowed mother, he moved in 1937 from his native Shandong in east China to northeastern Jilin province, part of the puppet state of Manchukuo that Japan had set up in 1932. He went to school in its capital, now called Changchun.

He was chosen to play in a 90-minute feature film

Good Boy as a naughty orphan who is adopted by an orphanage and becomes a model child, to show the humanitarianism of the government.

The film was made by the Manchurian Film Studio, set up by the Japanese in 1937, to produce newsreels, documentaries, musicals and feature films for the puppet state.

The studio was an instrument of state policy, its goal to make people forget they were Chinese and believe they were Manchurians who should obey Japan, Yu said.

But he retains bitter memories of that period. Life in Manchukuo was difficult, with the Japanese the ruling elite and Chinese regarded as second-class citizens in a society rife with informers and secret police ready to report any wrong word or action.

A gulf existed between ordinary Chinese and their Japanese masters, with rice only for Japanese and elite Chinese and ordinary Chinese arrested if they were found eating it, he said.

Chinese could only ride in "labour cars" with red

number plates, while Japanese rode in luxury cars with white plates.

"The Japanese boys were so arrogant in their smart uniforms and looked down on us in our poor clothes," he recalled.

"We often used to fight them to get our revenge." Many Chinese opposed Japan but many collaborated with it. Japan used Chinese to control Manchuria, he said.

Among them were some stars of the Manchurian Film Studio, who served prison terms after the war as "cultural traitors."

After Japan's surrender in 1945, Yu joined his brother in the Communist movement and started making films about the civil war with the Nationalists, working beside Japanese technicians from the Manchurian Film Studio who were unable to return home.

After the Communist victory in 1949 and the expulsion of the Nationalist government to Taiwan, Yu moved to Beijing where he became a distinguished actor and director.

He played workers, Communist guerrillas,

policemen or heroes, while other Chinese actors were typecast as villains and doomed to play Japanese secret police or Nationalist officials. Yu was one of the best known actors of his generation.

His films in the 1950s were made when faith in communism was strong and their propaganda themes reflected wide popular support for the party.

But, as faith in the party has waned, so has interest in such films, with many people, especially the young, preferring love and action films from Hong Kong, Taiwan and the United States.

Yu's films are among the 100 "patriotic education" films being broadcast on Chinese television over 12 months in the run-up to the Aug. 15 anniversary.

Yu said his films were important to help young Chinese understand the history of their own country, and how many people sacrificed their lives to make China an independent, sovereign nation.

Young Japanese also should see these films to understand properly their history, he said.

Film depicts Kissinger-Nixon friction before Vietnam pullout

By David Crary

The Associated Press

TORONTO — Henry Kissinger paces through a cavernous film studio, muttering to himself in that unmistakable accent.

Vietnam and Richard Nixon are on his mind. OK, it's an impostor. But actor Ron Silver has been transformed into such an uncanny double that the make-up artists have become celebrities on the set of Kissinger.

And Nixon, a film being produced in Toronto for Turner Network Television.

It's not the only big-time production focusing on the former president — Oliver Stone comes out in December with Nixon, starring Anthony Hopkins, Ed Harris and James Woods. But the principals in Kissinger and Nixon feel a sense of risk because they know Kissinger and others involved in the 1972-73 Vietnam ceasefire negotiations will be closely following their work.

"Kissinger saw an early draft of the script and gave us his comments," said executive producer Daniel Blatt. "We reacted to some, and didn't react to others."

Blatt wouldn't detail

Kissinger's objections.

"He's not a consultant," Blatt said. "We feel comfortable that what we are portraying is historically accurate."

Kissinger can be assured his role is in sympathetic hands. Silver not only knows Kissinger socially, but back in the Vietnam War era was a history and politics buff who shunned anti-war protests and contemplated a career as a CIA agent.

"When you start to play a character well, you do begin to empathise with him," Silver said during a break. "Kissinger was a decent man trying to do a very complex job in a very complex situation."

The film, based on the biography Kissinger by Walter Isaacson, focuses on a crucial period in late 1972 and early 1973 that produced an awkward ceasefire in Vietnam and enabled U.S. troops to withdraw. Egos and ambitions often overshadowed principles as Kissinger, then the national security adviser, pursued his lone-horseman diplomacy while White House aides urged Nixon not to trust him.

Kissinger reached an accord with the North

Vietnamese in October 1972, but deliberately failed to keep South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu informed of the talks. Thieu refused to accept the deal without further concessions from Hanoi, and Nixon ordered the notorious "Christmas bombings" of Hanoi and Haiphong in December that prodded the North Vietnamese back to the bargaining table at the cost of worldwide outrage.

Nixon is played by Beau Bridges, who was a staunch anti-war activist at the time, but found a new perspective during extensive research of his character.

"What emerged was quite a different person," Bridges said. "When I was young, I hated all his decisions. I still disagree with what he did, but I understand now that he did see himself as a peacemaker."

Bridges' daily make-up routine takes almost five hours, compared to a mere three for Silver. Charles Portier, who does Bridges' make-up, said he subtly scaled down Nixon's famous nose so it would be proportionate to the actor's face.

"We didn't want caricatures," he said. "Both

these roles have make-ups that could have easily become political cartoons."

Bridges said he has worked hard to convey the former president's mannerisms and voice without appearing to mimic him.

"It's a responsibility to portray someone people have very strong feelings about," Bridges said. "The best I can hope for is that I capture the essence of the man."

The script was written by Lionel Chetwynd, whose credits include Sadat and Hanoi Hilton.

"This is the riskiest thing I've ever done," he said by telephone from Los Angeles. "This is contemporary American history. Everyone has their own opinion on it. ... There's a tremendous obligation to be sure what you are doing is just and right."

The director, Dan Perle Sr., has coped with White House life before — in the made-for-TV Roosevelt drama Eleanor and Franklin. He also directed Fort Apache: The Bronx and Cocoon: The Return.

Blatt said Kissinger and Nixon could air either late this year or early in 1996.

Let's talk cheap with Peter Fonda: He knows cheap

By Stephen Schaefer
Reuter



Peter Fonda

NEW YORK — Let's talk cheap with Peter Fonda, Henry's son, Jane's brother and Bridget's father.

Fonda, who co-produced the 1960s classic *Easy Rider* for \$262,000, knows about low-budget movies and he knows the difference between cheap and ultra-cheap. And he knows even more these days because he is starring in *Nadja*, a hip black-and-white film about Dracula's undead progeny, with lesbian overtones and a batty sense of humour.

Fonda plays the legendary fearless vampire hunter Van Helsing. A *Schindler's List* discovery, the Garbo-like Elina Owensohn, plays the count's undead daughter Nadja.

"Because they wouldn't fly me in or put me up," as he puts it, Fonda learned that the only way for a Montana-based actor to co-star in a New York no-money movie is to

have access to an apartment in the city and a lot of frequent flier miles.

Fonda, who had both, already knew that in Hollywood it's who you know, but he was reminded of that with Nadja. After all, he found out about the role because Eric Stoltz (*Naked In New York* and *Pulp Fiction*), his daughter's longtime lover and thus his unofficial son-in-law, was going to play Van Helsing's son in the movie that was made for less than \$1 million by director Michael Almeredyda.

But Stoltz left to do a different movie (presumably one that paid better than the \$1,400-a-week all the actors in *Nadja* received as the Screen Actors Guild minimum wage). Martin Donovan was quickly cast in the Stoltz role, and Fonda stayed.

More recently Fonda learned that an economy publicity tour meant a cheap overnight flight from Los Angeles to New York with a stopover in Cincinnati that gave him "only 45 minutes of sleep"

before he began a day of interviews. Sitting in his West Side Manhattan hotel, Fonda matter-of-factly noted the Spartan simplicity of his suite and another lesson in today's independent movie world whirl: "This is where they put you when they don't have any money."

Obviously Fonda, dressed in denim, cowboy boots and tinted aviator glasses and sporting a grey-streaked ponytail, cares more about the work than movie star luxury. At 56, he still works with an acting coach and talks about the mystical highs giving a performance can generate.

"I had a blast making this," said the veteran actor who began in movies with *Tammy and the Doctor* (1962) and spent much of the last decade in straight-to-video exploitation movies. "For 40 years I was known as Henry Fonda's son and for the next 20 I'm going to be 'Bridget Fonda's dad,'" he said between chugs from an unfashionable brand of

bottled water.

"I'm very comfortable with that," the proud father added. "She is so f---ing cool."

They will be on screen together next year in *Allison Anders' Grace In My Heart*, he said. "Bridget is going to play Lesley Gore, the 1960s pop singer, and I'm Guru Dave."

Father and daughter have teamed up before. When dad did a cameo as an *Easy Rider*-style biker in 1993's *Bodies*, Rest And Motion, which Stoltz co-produced, Bridget, the film's star, unexpectedly arrived on the set.

"She hid behind the seat in the back of the car, just so we would be on film together. Even if no one could see her," he said.

But the very first time they were teamed was in *Easy Rider*, Fonda reveals. "Bridget was a little girl and my son Justin was the baby" in the sleeper hit that cemented his pot-smoking, long-haired, motorcycling image.

The film remains Fonda's career peak. Nothing

could be as sweet as the worldwide *Easy Rider* hoopla for a movie that he also co-produced.

"Yes, it made me rich. Famous I didn't have to be I was born famous," he said.

But in Hollywood, the man responsible for the industry's subsequent "youthquake" was hardly a popular figure.

Overnight, the so-called independent film that chronicled a drug dealing cross-country trip and made Jack Nicholson a star changed the way Hollywood looked at movies. It also put many middle-aged filmmakers out to pasture and paved the way for bright movie-struck kids like Steven Spielberg and Martin Scorsese to get their first breaks.

"The union minimum then was \$392 a week," Fonda remembers. "That's how much it cost me to have Jack Nicholson — and it was the best \$392 I've ever spent, you know what I mean?"

Fonda not only knows cheap — he likes cheap.

As urbanisation takes over, artists turn garbage to art

By Tina Susman
The Associated Press

ABIDJAN, Ivory Coast — Countless pairs of feet must have tramped past the stove top lying abandoned on an Abidjan street in January. Not those of an artist named Anapa.

Mellowed by a bit of marijuana, an image of colours melting together in his mind, Anapa picked up the battered piece of metal, took it home and created a work that now hangs alongside similarly born pieces in the city's museum.

The exhibit featuring artists who use scavenged material such as scrap metal and garbage pri-

marily has attracted school groups since it opened in April, a reflection of the problem African artists face gaining attention at home.

However, the fact the works are exhibited at all in Abidjan is a boost to a growing number of African artists who say traditional masks and woodcarvings have little to do with life on the rapidly urbanizing continent.

"I grew up with the things of the city, not of the village," said Anapa, 33, an Abidjan native who uses just one name. "We, the artists of this generation, we're complicated. We've seen the dances and the masks of initiation

in books, but I don't really know it. I was never a part of it."

The use of garbage for art in West Africa began in earnest in 1970 when students at Abidjan's School of Fine Arts couldn't afford paints, clay for sculpting and other materials.

In frustration, they began scavenging for alternatives and discovered that sand, dirt, abandoned clothes, broken mirrors, old buttons, bicycle chains, old cans, bottle caps and just about anything else picked off the street could be put to creative use.

The students called their movement "Vohou-Vohou," which loosely

translates to "anything goes." While its origins were due largely to economic problems, some founders saw it a chance for African artists to make a statement against the influence of Western material on their work.

"We should be able to produce something that is typical of Africa. We should not look at what we're getting from the West and just copy it," said Youssouf Bath, a Vohou-Vohou founder who uses sand, twigs, old paper, tree bark and even fruit-peels in his work.

Since Vohou-Vohou's beginnings, garbage art has come to signify not just rejection of Western influence but the over-

crowding of Africa's cities.

In West and Central Africa, where this style of art is the most widely seen, urban populations are growing at three times the general population rate. Mountains of debris tossed out by the exploding populace grow along Abidjan's roads and are burned periodically to make way for more mountains. There are no recycling bins here. The idea of making an extra effort to preserve the environment is alien to a largely impoverished society, where daily survival takes so much effort.

The result is an environmental nightmare and a gold mine for artists like Anapa.

He spotted the stove top in January while ambulating through Abobo, a teeming Abidjan neighbourhood whose streets

are lined with shacks selling old car parts and scrap metal. Returning to his home, which doubles as his studio, Anapa painted the metal in blue, red and yellow, accentuating the four burners and ending up with something that looks like a modernistic painting from a distance but comes into view as a stove top close.

By using castoff materials, Anapa hopes to show Africans that they can create things and not rely upon Western imports. He considers himself not part of the Vohou-Vohou movement but part of a group of younger artists who use only the remnants of urbanisation in their work, such as scrap metal for sculpting and blue jeans material for canvases.

The results of both movements are similar,

however.

Lining a wall across from Anapa's stove top are the works of Vohou-Vohou sculptor Sery Puig, who, until his death in 1992, used auto parts to create fantastic replicas of animals and bugs. A crankcase painted gold forms the body of a giant mosquito — Nissan fenders and sidings painted are two giant rabbits copulating — black motorcycle parts are transformed into a huge scorpion.

The Benin Artist Romuald Hazoume turns the tables on traditional African masks by creating his own masks from castoffs such as hand irons and plastic jerry cans.

Most of the artists have had works exhibited in New York, London and Paris, but it's a battle gaining recognition in their own countries. The dilapi-

dated state of many West African museums is evidence of government neglect of the arts. With wars raging and the region in an overall economic decline, even less money is likely to go towards maintaining museums, which generally house sparse collections.

Traditional masks and woodcarvings that might be on display instead are sold in tourist markets. Works recognised as valuable are pilfered for sale to museums overseas, a practice that led the U.S. government to ban imports of ancient art from Mali, which has been nearly looted dry.

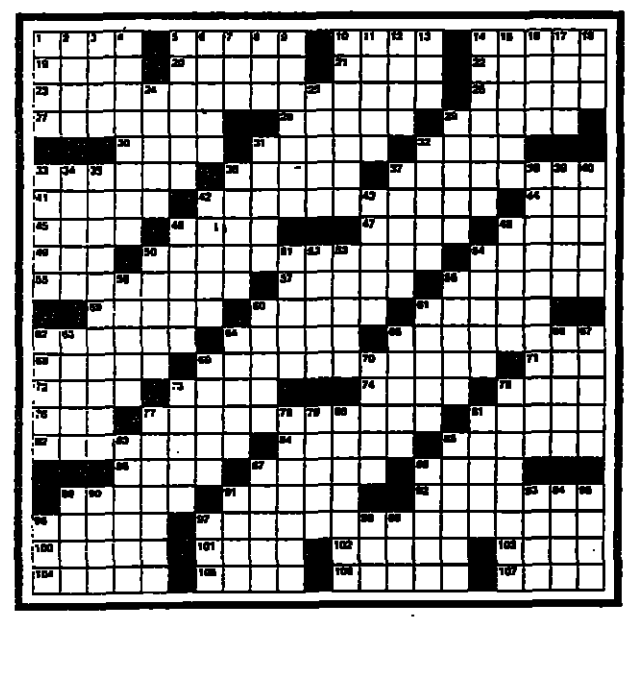
Anapa says virtually all his sales have been to foreigners, and museum director Yaya Savane said the adults who visit the exhibition are mainly university students or foreign embassy groups.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

UNFORGIVING

By Fran Ragus

- ACROSS
- 1 Fundamentals
 - 5 Substance
 - 9 Doves
 - 10 Nova
 - 11 Cow
 - 12 Victim
 - 13 Which town
 - 14 Three
 - 15 Cream de la
 - 16 Come
 - 17 Consider
 - 18 Reluctant
 - 19 Ward
 - 20 Bad-tempered
 - 21 Woman
 - 22 Yellow
 - 23 "I'm a bit"
 - 24 "I'm a bit"
 - 25 "I'm a bit"
- DOWN
- 1 Representatives
 - 2 Brien
 - 3 Brien
 - 4 Brien
 - 5 Brien
 - 6 Brien
 - 7 Brien
 - 8 Brien
 - 9 Brien
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 - 25 Brien



By Raymond Chow
The Associated Press

HONG KONG — How does an action star whose last movie premiered two decades ago compete in a world where Arnie, Sly, Bruce and Wesley are kings?

Easy, when that star is martial arts legend Bruce Lee.

Just ask Tomoko Uekawa.

"To me, he's not just a movie star — he's my teacher, my father and my brother," says the 28-year-old transport supervisor from Kobe, who saw her first Lee movie at age 13 on Japanese TV.

"His tough appearance turned me on," she says.

Twenty-two years after his death of a brain aneurysm at age 32, Lee's legend kicks on, kept alive by fans who range from heavyweight boxer Mike Tyson to a former doctor for the Mongolian Olympic team who trekked 3,700 miles with two friends to visit Lee's grave in Seattle.

But nowhere, perhaps, is Lee's memory cherished more than in Hong Kong, where the lithe, muscular actor first found fame and where he's still known affectionately as Lee Siu-Lung, "little dragon Lee."

Lee fans turned out in force for a six-day exhibition that coincided with the anniversary of his death on July 20, 1973. Organised by the 400-strong Bruce Lee Club, the display featured Lee memorabilia and a Kato look-alike, the Kung-Fu chopping chauffeur Lee played in the 1960s TV show, *The Green Hornet*, which still airs on television in Hong Kong.

Fans keep the Bruce Lee legend alive

Photos and posters showed Lee in the pose that made him famous — arms thrust forward, legs spread and that menacing, piercing gaze which often heralded a bone-crunching attack and an "aaaaaahhhhh" yell.

Fans gazed at Lee's "nunchaku," the two chain-linked truncheons he wielded with awesome speed. They bought studio glossies of Lee and copies of the yellow track suit he wore in *Game Of Death*, which Lee was filming in Hong Kong when he died.

Lee's films were made without the computer wizardry and complex special effects that have skyrocketed budgets and featured in recent offerings from Arnold Schwarzenegger, Sylvester Stallone and their ilk.

Yet Lee's last complete film, *Enter The Dragon*, grossed more than \$100 million, and remains a favourite for armchair action-film addicts.

He was born Lee Yuen Kam in San Francisco, but spent much of his early years in Hong Kong. He returned to the United States and attended college at the University of Washington where he studied philosophy.

Lee's first movie was *The Birth Of Mankind* in 1946. He followed that with *Kid Cheung* (1950),

ourselves," says Mok Kwong-Yin, 39, a civil servant desperate to be photographed with the Kato clone.

Lawrence Cheng, the Bruce Lee Club's secretary, recalls how as a kid he wore baggy pants and vests like his hero and studied his films — "fascinated at how Lee could kick five times in a row."

"His thoughts still apply even after 20 years. Even though he's dead, he left behind a way of thinking and an image that lives on," says 33-year-old Cheng, who has hoarded Lee memorabilia for 25 years and seen Lee's movies so often he can recite the scripts.

It was Lee who attracted Uekawa to Hong Kong, where the San Francisco-born actor grew up.

She says Lee's example encouraged her to ignore a bully at high school. "Nobody dared help me. But after reading Lee's philosophy, which encourages one to be flexible and adaptive like water, I got confidence," she recalled.

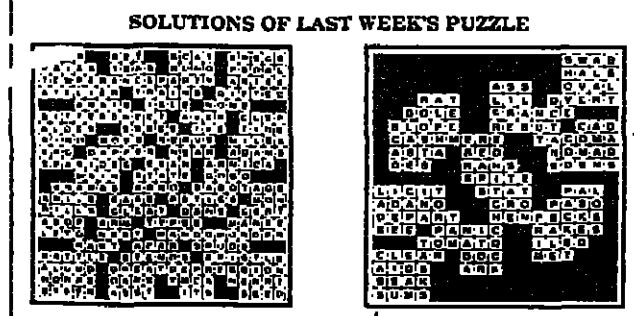
"Later, I began to love his personality. At university, I studied philosophy because of him."

Diagramless, 19 x 19
By Frances Burton

- ACROSS
- 1 Last
 - 2 There in the
 - 3 Musical
 - 4 Musical
 - 5 Musical
 - 6 Musical
 - 7 Musical
 - 8 Musical
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 - 14 Musical
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 - 16 Musical
 - 17 Musical
 - 18 Musical
 - 19 Musical
- DOWN
- 1 Acute
 - 2 Acute
 - 3 Acute
 - 4 Acute
 - 5 Acute
 - 6 Acute
 - 7 Acute
 - 8 Acute
 - 9 Acute
 - 10 Acute
 - 11 Acute
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 - 13 Acute
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 - 16 Acute
 - 17 Acute
 - 18 Acute
 - 19 Acute

Last Week's Cryptograms

- 1. Bold new mockingbird in zoo cage amazes all the little kids with his chatter.
 - 2. Quirky squid squirts ink in my aquarium and quips, "I'm quite often inquisitive if piqued."
 - 3. Football player was annoyed when he fumbled and coach replaced him with substitute.
 - 4. If we exhaust all of our resources, how soon before we too will be extinct?
- CRYPTOGRAMS
- 1. FEW MEKEW TBY JKKECA ED MEC DEL YBQQYK YKETIK BWHY EA ME AJHCEA QMK LBDDBT CID. — By Earl Ireland
 - 2. ONEKXKXKXBD XTIXDKXNDI B OTCYND UMN VERDZY INC UMDE MY MNQTY NEMTCY AED IBER INC. — By Barbara J. Hagg
 - 3. XSWY UT ASHKKX SQKQVW ONW YUSKXI NV IUAJWSIX OXIE ENJXWIST ZUSWV GBAJXKI NBI CPJXK BQ. — By Rita Salazar
 - 4. FIGGION TSADBJOHN BEMHO NFFIGHT DIGT JAMS NIGHT SE YIGHT. — By Ed Huddleston



ANSWERS

PUZZLES

A doggy problem

- 1. Sheepdog
- 2. Airedale
- 3. St. Bernard

Vietnam, China make money, not war — but tensions simmer

By Kathy Wilhelm
The Associated Press

FRIENDSHIP PASS, Vietnam — Trucks rumble across on lucrative trade runs. Chinese and Vietnamese tourists chatter and laugh as they pose for photos. In the pauses between, bird song twitters from the thick greenery along the road.

The sounds of peace have taken the place of gunfire at this meeting point between two of Asia's most heavily armed nations — China and Vietnam.

But there are also clues here to the tensions that remain below the surface.

Both countries' final checkpoints are several hundred yards from the boundary, which is undisturbed by gates, guards or flags. That is because Vietnam disputes the location, accusing China of having moved the border marker 300 metres in its favour during the two countries' 1979 war.

Four years after their 1991 detente, they are still arguing the point, along with more than 200 other locations along the 1,460-kilometre border.

Until the location of Friendship Pass is settled, Vietnam is refusing to resume cross-border rail service there. It was cut in 1979.

"The Vietnamese people

still have to watch out for the Chinese. They are bigger than Vietnamese and we don't know when they will strike us," said Nguyen Thi Nhung, a peasant woman who works as a porter at the border, voicing what Vietnamese officials will only say privately.

Off the record, the officials speak bluntly about their fears of China. They note that while the United States fought in Vietnam for less than two decades, China occupied it for more than 1,000 years and invaded repeatedly after being driven out in the year 938.

China sent Hanoi arms during the war with the United States, but Vietnamese history books say the Chinese also supported Vietnam's division in 1956 and tried to maintain the split in the 1970s.

It is chiefly fear of China, which now claims parts of Vietnam's continental shelf and a vast stretch of sea on Vietnam's southeastern flank, that has pushed Hanoi to seek broader international ties.

This summer, Vietnam gained long-sought U.S. diplomatic recognition. It also joined the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, founded in 1967 as a buffer against Communism in Asia and now seen as a buffer against Chinese expansionism.

Yet Vietnam still sees be-

nefits from the peace with China. All along the mountainous border, towns and villages remote from other trade routes are achieving new prosperity from trading with China.

"I don't know if the Chinese are friends or not, or whether we will have war again or not, but if they trade with us, we are happy," said Truong Thi Tinh, 36, a former teacher who now distributes Chinese beer.

Smuggling also has grown, bringing in an estimated \$1 billion worth of Chinese consumer goods each year and sending somewhat less Vietnamese rice, fruit and other agricultural products in the opposite direction.

Officially, China is only Vietnam's sixth-largest trading partner, with two-way trade of about \$500 million last year. Most was conducted between state-owned companies, but growing numbers of private businessmen and tourists also are venturing, albeit timidly, across the border.

At Friendship Pass, two young Chinese women crossed to the Vietnamese side, posed for pictures, then turned back.

"We just came to have a look and have some fun," said one, who would give only her surname, Lin. Her tight blue-jean shorts and high heels would have drawn stares in relatively

conservative Vietnam if she had lingered.

At Tam Thanh Pass, to the west, two Chinese women squatted in the dust on their side of a low barbed-wire fence and waited for Vietnamese porters to carry across a shipment of lychees.

"They put stones in the fruit to make them heavier. But they say whatever we sell is poison, no matter how nice it is," grumbled one of the Chinese women, surnamed Xu.

Her impressions of Vietnam from brief visits: "Their lives are no good, just too hard. Their houses are poor and their children have diseases you never see in China."

Many Chinese regard Vietnam with the same superiority that Westerners often bring to China. They see it as dirty and backward and in need of economic reform.

"Chinese law is lacking compared to the West, right? Well, Vietnamese law is lacking compared to China's. There's so much bureaucracy and a lot of corruption," said Pang Budan, manager of the Kim Son Hotel, one of just three Vietnamese-Chinese joint ventures in Lang Son Province, which adjoins Friendship Pass.

"They haven't had much contact with the outside world, not like us Chinese

who have been open for more than a decade," he said.

Mr. Pang said about a third of his guests are Chinese businessmen but many are only looking things over, waiting for better investment opportunities.

Construction might be a good choice. New buildings are going up all over the province and its capital town, also named Lang Son. Few signs remain of the devastation wrought in 1979, when more than 200,000 Chinese soldiers attacked.

China declared it was punishing Vietnam for invading Cambodia and toppling the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge. China pulled its troops back after a month, but the total death toll was already 56,000. Both sides kept up cross-border shelling through the late 1980s, preventing rebuilding.

Residents said Dong Dang, a market town nearly three kilometres from Friendship Pass, stayed in ruins until the 1991 rapprochement.

"The Chinese took everything they could and what they couldn't carry, they destroyed," said a government employee who gave his name as Phi.

"They carried back electric poles, telephone poles, railroad tracks. We didn't re-

build because the border wasn't stable. I lived in a thatch house for more than 10 years."

Several hundred thousand ethnic Chinese who lived in Vietnam fled or were pressured to leave. Among them was Chen Jinrong, then 18. His father's ancestors had come from China generations earlier. His mother was Vietnamese.

"We were afraid. We couldn't take anything. We just ran," he said. "We sneaked into China."

Now he comes back to trade, travelling on a Chinese passport, and says he bears no ill-will.

"If we can make money, we're happy," he said, surveying a load of olives he planned to send north.

"The things of the past are past," he added.

Not entirely Mr. Chen said his family has not told anyone in China that his mother is ethnic Vietnamese. They pretend she belongs to a border-region minority group.

At one of the few pre-1979 buildings still standing in Lang Son town, a Vietnamese man echoed Chen's philosophy.

"If I think of the past I still feel angry. But the best thing now is to forgive and forget, because we are neighbours," said Dang Long, a city judge. "We should build peace."

Letter from Damascus Arabian Nights tell modern day tales

By Henry Ruffie

"THERE ARE only three subjects which are beyond criticism," a Damascus professor told Charles Glass in 1987, "the president himself, the army and the party. Otherwise, you are free to say what you like about anything."

During the first part of 1995, a further subject became taboo: open discussion of the normalisation of relations with Israel. In recent years the Syrian government has slowly edged towards direct talks. Its negotiating position is weakened if Syrian individuals go around meeting Israelis, exploring options of cultural and academic interchange. Early this year, Syria's most distinguished poet, Adonis was expelled from the Syrian Arab Writers' Union for having advocated normalisation with Israel. Adonis lives outside Syria and his fame is assured. But many other Syrians who travel to international conferences are on their guard. They fear manipulation by well-wishers who seek to accelerate the peace process by getting Israelis and Syrians together. The fate of Adonis is a sharp reminder of the shifting boundary of freedom of expression. Syrians are not going to put their jobs and livelihoods at risk.

But artistic creativity is not stifled. The Ministry of Culture "licenses" much activity that is challenging to political orthodoxy and to artistic conservatism. This spring two plays have been performed in Damascus that demonstrate vigour in Syrian cultural life.

Riyad Ismat is one of Syria's leading intellectuals, a writer of short stories, plays and literary criticism. He has lived in the United States and Britain and is alert to what is going on in the world. At the same time, he is firmly rooted in a Damascus theatrical tradition that goes back to Abu Khalil Al Qabbani a century and more ago. Ismat's play, the *Nights of Shahriyar*, was actually first produced in English in Cardiff in 1982, but the author has translated it and the first Arabic production played to packed houses in Damascus in May 1995.

It is based on stories from the *Arabian Nights*. A story-teller introduces the story of Shahrazad and actors come on and play the parts described. Shahrazad herself takes over the role of story-teller and more actors act out her stories. And so on. Shifting stages, lighting and swift and deft activity by the actors produce a fast moving fantasia with a message of sexual equality but which also echoes popular traditions. "The theatre,"

argues Ismat, "should not be a museum."

One month earlier, foreign students of Arabic at the Institut Français des Etudes Arabes staged, in Arabic, one of the plays of Syria's best known dramatist Sa'dallah Wannus, now, sadly, in poor health and confined to his home. The play, *The Elephant, Oh Lord of Ages*, is an allegory and illustrates the Damascus professor's comment on creative freedom. Wannus' play tells the story of a village that is harassed by the king's elephant that tramples crops and has actually killed a child. The villagers see the with frustrated rebellion. Along comes Zakaria, full of bounce and confidence, who proposes that they confront the king and complain. The villagers argue among themselves. Zakaria drills them to articulate their grievances and they troop off to the king's palace. Zakaria will be their principal spokesman. Officials at the palace treat the villagers with contempt. They are conducted into the presence of the king, haughty, distant and majestic. Zakaria starts.

"We want to talk about the elephant."

"What about the elephant?" snaps the king.

"We think the elephant..."

"Yes?" roars the king.

"... is lonely," snivels Zakaria, his confidence collapsed, "and ... needs a mate."

The villagers are too cowed to object. The king cordially agrees, appoints Zakaria as keeper of the elephants and promises a five-day holiday with celebrations for the wedding of the elephant. The delegation leaves, crushed.

Wannus has argued that all his writings are political. Readers and audience can interpret *The Elephant, Oh Lord of Ages* however they like. When I asked a Syrian friend whether the censorship authorities were being liberal-minded or were failing to see a veiled attack on the security forces, he said, "neither. The play has no contemporary relevance. The satire was focused on a previous regime."

Wannus is certainly "licensed." For 30 years he has written powerful, innovative plays. He has torn down the barrier between actors and audience. Actors have been placed in the audience to heckle actors on the stage. This has encouraged the public to heckle. One production had actors playing the parts of the secret police, apparently arresting members of the audience.

President Assad in recent months has paid for expensive medical treatment for Sa'dallah Wannus.

Middle East International

Serbs under heavy attacks

(Continued from page 1)

The air raids and artillery barrages aimed to "seriously reduce the (Serb) artillery around Sarajevo," said Bernard Janvier, commander of U.N. troops in former Yugoslavia.

NATO targets included air-defence radar and communication sites, ammunition depots and command posts throughout Bosnia.

Two waves of aircraft, including U.S. Navy F-18 and F-14 fighters, struck in the dead of night, beginning just after 2 a.m. midnight GMT.

NATO officials refused to specify which other countries were involved in the raids, but officials in Washington said 50 U.S. aircraft participated in the first strike. The British Defence Ministry says British aircraft "played a full part" in the NATO operation.

French, Dutch and other nations' aircraft are also in the region enforcing a U.N. "no fly" zone over Bosnia.

U.N. sources said the planes also targeted Bosnian Serb air defences near the towns of Mostar in the west, Gorzade in the east, and Tuzla to the north, but there was no immediate NATO confirmation.

Three more attacks came after daylight.

Pierre Briere, a U.N. spokesman, said the third wave was directed against Bosnian Serb military targets near Sarajevo. The planes, which appeared to be American F-16s, headed east towards Serb-held areas before detonations were heard.

Around the time of the fourth attack, two F-16s flew towards the suburb of Lukavica, the rebels' most important military position around the city. U.N. and NATO officials said the airstrikes set fire to an ammunition dump there.

Planes struck a fifth time in late afternoon near Pale, the Bosnian Serb headquarters southeast of Sarajevo. Sources there said a major Bosnian Serb air defence radar complex on nearby Mount Jabrin had been hit.

Between the nighttime and daytime raids, the multinational rapid reaction force on Mount Igman, southwest of the city, fired more than 600

shells on Serb positions surrounding the Bosnian capital, Colonel Briere said.

The overnight raids left bright flashes of light tinged the sky. The spectacle awoke Sarajevans, and many were hanging out their windows to watch the assault on their Serb foes.

"I feel good, oh yes" declared 58-year-old Musrata Sabic, leaning from her balcony for a better view. "I feel good, probably for the first time in this war. It looks like they're 'skinning' them alive."

With the international community expressing determination for the first time to strike the Serbs until they stop threatening the capital and other U.N. "safe zones," the NATO campaign could mark the turning point in the 40-month-old Bosnian war.

It could force the Serbs to accept peace terms they have rejected. But if the Serbs react defiantly as they have to past NATO raids, the U.S.-sponsored peace mission could wither, leading to a pullout of U.N. troops and the flow to direct Western military aid to the Muslim-led Bosnian government.

"Our objective is to reduce the threat to the Sarajevo safe area and to deter further attacks there or on any other safe area," Mr. Claes said.

He told ABC television that "if the Bosnian Serbs are continuing to launch a challenge, we will continue and even enhance our military activities."

U.N. spokesman Alexander Ivanko suggested the NATO assaults would continue until the Serb agreed to pull back heavy weapons from the Sarajevo region or until those weapons were destroyed.

The U.N. sent that message in a letter to Gen. Mladic, the Bosnian Serb commander, he said.

"Its basic message was: 'We have warned you of the consequences of an attack... against a safe area. Unless that threat is removed, the NATO-U.N. operation will be ongoing,'" Mr. Ivanko said.

The first official reaction from Bosnian Serb leaders came from their self-styled Serb positions around Sarajevo and said: "NATO



The body of a four-year-old laid out on a stretcher in a Sarajevo morgue. The girl was among the known 37 people killed in a Bosnian Serb mortar attack on Sarajevo on Monday (AFP photo)

stepped over the line of its involvement in the conflict."

"Alleged Serb shelling of Sarajevo was not the real reason for this ridiculous act by the international community," the SRNA news agency quoted him as saying. He did not elaborate.

Serbs dropped several shells on downtown Sarajevo Wednesday. The government responded with dozens of mortar rounds out of the city towards Serb positions.

Bosnia's president, Alija Izetbegovic, was in Paris, where he had just concluded two days of peace talks with U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Richard Holbrooke.

He welcomed the NATO airstrikes as a long-awaited sign that Bosnia is "moving towards peace."

"The world has finally done what it should have done a long, long time ago," Mr. Izetbegovic said.

President Bill Clinton,

speaking in Jackson, Wyoming, said the NATO operation was "an appropriate response to the shelling of Sarajevo."

But Russia, a traditional Serb ally, condemned both Wednesday's offensive and the Serb attack that provoked it.

"We still oppose the use of force to solve the Yugoslav crisis," President Boris Yeltsin said in an interview on Russian public television.

Israel lifts Jericho siege

(Continued from page 1)

policemen who had no search warrants and who refused to state their identity.

Yizhar settlers are close to Kach, an anti-Arab movement banned by the government after the massacre of 38 Palestinians by an Israeli settler in the West Bank town of Hebron.

In Gaza city two Palestinian police officers have been suspended from duty after the death of a prisoner held by the self-rule authority, the prosecutor general, Khaled Al Kidra, said Wednesday.

Taufik Sbeil Al Sawarqa, 36, had been held since Aug. 27 by the Palestinian security services for "security reasons."

In an inquiry ordered by PLO leader Yasser Arafat "two officers have been suspended and are being questioned," Mr. Kidra said. The inquiry was continuing.

Sawarqa was the fifth Palestinian to die while in police custody since the launch of autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho in May 1994.

Palestinian sources said he was suspected of supplying arms to Hamas.

His death was announced late Tuesday.

Human rights groups have criticised the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) for its treatment of prisoners.

A Palestinian stabbed and slightly wounded an Israeli policeman with a kitchen knife in Arab East Jerusalem, police said.

The policeman, who was guarding a house belonging to right-wing politician Ariel Sharon, was protected by his bullet proof vest, but hurt his hand in a struggle with his 21-year-old attacker, who was arrested.

Israeli security services have stepped up surveillance of right-wing extremists amid fears they might try to assassinate government figures in a bid to destroy the peace process.

The government is taking seriously threats made by Jewish extremists of drastic action as the deal to extend Palestinian self-rule across the West Bank nears completion, security officials said.

U.S. 'warns' Damascus

(Continued from page 1)

some of the statements threatening the U.S. are being made by groups and individuals based in Syria," the Post reported.

"There can be no justification for their direct threats to American citizens and to American interests. The groups responsible must be in no doubt that the U.S. takes these threats seriously and reserves the right to respond in any way it deems necessary to terrorism against its citizens or interests," the cable continued.

The message went on to say Washington expects Syria to do "everything in its power"

to ensure the groups do not harm to U.S. citizens.

"We are also making this clear directly to Iran," the paper quoted the cable as saying.

Syria denies that it participates in or endorses extremist attacks, and has told Washington it is committed to negotiating a peace agreement with Israel.

Threats from Hamas, Hizbollah and other groups against U.S. interests followed the arrest last month in New York of Musa Abu Marzouk, an acknowledged official of Hamas who is under detention pending a hearing Oct. 17 on an extradition request by Israel.

Iraq, Kuwait extend talks

(Continued from page 1)

in Kuwait and later transferred to Iraq.

Kuwait and Iraq have met previously in Geneva at the series of talks which are also attended by delegates from the United States, Britain, France and Saudi Arabia.

Meanwhile, the 1,400 U.S. troops sent to Kuwait following renewed tension with Iraq took part in manoeuvres to hone navigation skills in the northern Kuwaiti desert.

Captain Austin Johnson of the U.S. Army's First Cavalry Division said Abram battle tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles and command-and-

control vehicles were deployed during the exercises.

He did not give any more details about the manoeuvres, which began early Wednesday. Kuwaiti forces are expected to take part in the war games at a later stage, but Capt. Johnson did not say when that would be.

The United States built up its forces in the region after Saddam Hussein's son-in-law, Hussein Kamel Hassan, defected to Jordan on Aug. 8. He said Iraq was planning an attack on Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

The United States currently has 23,000 troops and eight warships in the region.

One of Iraq's main opposition groups said Tuesday the commander of an Iraqi air force base and several of his officers have defected to Saudi Arabia.

The Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SCIRI) said Baghdad's forces surrounded the base and officers' quarters after learning of the defections.

"The commander of the Imam Ali air base, in Nasiriyah province (in southern Iraq), and several of his officers fled and took refuge in Saudi Arabia on Friday," the group claimed.

It said that another senior officer, General Maytham Hisham Al Tikriti, commander of an armoured vehicle base in President Saddam's

home town of Tikrit, was executed with three others last week.

The group said the execution was ordered by the president's eldest son, Uday, who had amassed great power after the defection of Gen. Hassan.

According to the group, Uday is now in charge of the elite Republican Guard and has sacked three of its officers and arrested dozens of others.

There was no independent confirmation of any of the claims. Kuwaiti newspapers on Monday claimed Uday was under house arrest.

An official Baghdad newspaper said the Iraqi leadership had overhauled its security arrangements follow-

ing the defection.

The English-language Baghdad Observer said the storm created by the defections would soon pass. It dismissed foreign speculation that the Iraqi government might soon fall as wishful thinking.

Lieutenant-Colonel Saddam Kamel Hassan, who headed the Presidential Guard Unit, defected along with his brother, Gen. Hassan.

The Observer said the Iraqi leadership had tackled whatever adverse effects the defections might have had "by introducing some radical changes on the security arrangements that have been under the supervision of Hussein Kamel's brother."

Baghdad newspapers also highlighted perceived differences between Egypt and Jordan on how to approach the Iraq issue.

They carried reports of Egyptian media criticism of Jordan.

Iraq rejected late Tuesday a demand by Gen. Hassan to release the full text of discussions at which he was said to have attacked U.N. disarmament chief Rolf Ekeus.

Gen. Hassan said earlier that his remarks had been aired out of context on Baghdad television as part of a campaign to discredit him.

"I challenge them to air the whole of the meeting because the part that was broadcast has no value unless it is run in context and with all the dis-

cussions that took place" in the ruling Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), he said.

But the Iraqi News Agency quoted an "authoritative source" as saying that "no country broadcasts the complete recording of discussions by its highest bodies on national security."

An Iraqi journalist in exile in Egypt urged Egypt to demand the extradition from Jordan of Gen. Hassan to face charges as a "war criminal," legal officials said in Cairo.

Ahmad Al Shayeb told Egypt's general prosecutor that Gen. Hassan had "tortured and killed several Iraqi opposition members as well

as Egyptian, Jordanian and Palestinian prisoners," they said.

Gen. Hassan "also forced several Egyptians to join the Iraqi army during the war with Iran" from 1980-1988, said Mr. Shayeb, who was imprisoned in Baghdad from 1980 to 1984.

He urged prosecutors to investigate "these war crimes and take the necessary legal measures to extradite" Gen. Hassan.

Mr. Shayeb fled to Egypt in September 1984 after an amnesty. He had been condemned to death in Baghdad for "spying for Egypt" but his sentence was commuted after the intervention of President Hosni Mubarak.

Japan plans new steps to breathe life into economy

TOKYO (R) — Japan has outlined another package of financial steps in its latest effort to nurse the economy back to a recovery path over the coming months.

Japan's economic planning chief said the package, which is due for release in late September, would focus on encouraging consumers to buy more. It would also maintain easy credit and try to further trim Japan's huge trade surplus.

He predicted that the package would help ensure that the stalled economy is back in recovery mode by the second half of this fiscal year, which ends next March.

"Through expansion of domestic demand and by regaining the trust of the people, the economy will steadily recover from the second half of this fiscal year," Economic Planning Agency Minister Isamu Miyazaki told a news conference.

Mr. Miyazaki was speaking after Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama told his economic ministers to complete the details of the package by around Sept. 20.

The latest set of stimuli will

be financed by a supplementary budget that is expected to exceed 10 trillion yen (104 billion). The budget will be debated in parliament in early October.

The planned package follows two others adopted in April and June. The April package was financed by a first supplementary budget for this fiscal year of 2.73 trillion yen (\$28 billion).

Finance Minister Masayoshi Takemura said separately that the new package would also look at public works spending.

The plan has been prompted by continuing concern about the state of the economy. A tentative recovery from the recession that kicked in following the collapse of the 1980s "bubble economy" has now stalled in the wake of the Kobe earthquake in January and the steep appreciation of the yen.

The dollar fell as low as 79.75 yen in July, after starting the year at about 101 yen, but has since recovered and is now trading around 97 yen.

The current account surplus, already on a declining

trend, will be cut further through increased imports. Once this happens, currency movements can be expected to become more stable," Mr. Miyazaki said.

Japanese firms say they are still suffering the after-effects of the yen's rise, which makes their goods more expensive for overseas consumers.

In addition, Mr. Miyazaki said there were fears that reduced domestic demand could induce a sharp fall in prices that could damage corporate profits. High unemployment also remains a worry, he added.

Government data released Tuesday showed that Japan's unemployment rate remained at a record high 3.2 per cent in July, unchanged from June.

But Mr. Miyazaki noted that the yen's recent fall and an accompanying rise in Tokyo stock prices had created a good climate for implementing new measures.

"With the yen weakening and stock prices gradually rising, giving a psychological boost to consumers and companies, now is the perfect time," he said.

U.S. economy slows dramatically

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. economy slowed dramatically in the second quarter of 1995, expanding at the weakest pace in nearly four years.

But the 1.1 per cent annual rate of growth for the April-June quarter, reported Wednesday by the Commerce Department, was larger than previously estimated, thanks largely to higher consumer spending.

Analysts said in advance of the report that the economy is not headed for recession and already is shaking off some sluggishness. They predict solid if unspectacular gains in gross domestic product (GDP) by the end of the year and into 1996.

The government said a month ago that GDP, measuring all goods and services produced in the United States, grew at an anemic 0.5 per cent rate in the spring.

In Wednesday's updated figures, the Commerce Department said upward revisions in consumer spending and business investment in inventories offset downward revisions for net exports and

government spending. The department also said that, using a new method of calculating growth that it is phasing in this year, GDP expanded only 0.5 per cent in the second quarter. The new method will formally replace the older system at the end of 1995 and is designed to measure price changes more accurately.

The economy has slowed markedly since late last year, when it grew at the fastest rate in a decade. GDP increased at a 2.7 per cent annual rate in the first three months of 1995 after a booming 5.1 per cent pace in the fourth quarter of 1994.

The Commerce Department also said Wednesday that after-tax corporate profits grew less rapidly in the second quarter, rising 1.5 per cent after increasing 3.8 per cent in the first three months of the year.

Inflation remained under control. One measure of the cost-of-living tied to GDP rose three per cent in the second quarter, matching the gain of the first three months this year.

Wednesday's report is not likely to increase pressure on the Federal Reserve to lower short-term interest rates again to give the economy another shot in the arm.

The next set of key data is due Friday when the Labour Department announces its employment figures for August.

The Federal Reserve, after seven interest-rate increases since early last year, reversed course in July and cut a key rate for the first time in nearly three years. But the central bank left the rate unchanged at a meeting of its policy-makers last week.

The Commerce Department said consumer spending, which accounts for about two-thirds of GDP, increased at a 3.04 billion rate in the second quarter, compared with \$14.3 billion the previous three months.

Analysts said the buying pickup may have been due to price cutting by businesses eager to reduce mounting stockpiles of goods.

They also noted that consumer confidence remains high. That was underscored

Tuesday when the government reported that new home sales rose in July for the third straight month.

The Commerce Department said the gains in consumer buying in the second quarter included increased spending on services and purchases of interest-sensitive, durable goods.

Inventories subtracted \$18.4 billion from GDP in the second quarter as car manufacturers trimmed production to match easing demand.

But the government said inventory investment still increased more rapidly than previously estimated, largely due to higher livestock build-up on farms.

Analysts said they expect the economy to pick up at a moderate head of steam by the end of the year after businesses reduce excess inventories.

Overall, GDP rose at a \$15.1 billion rate in the April-June quarter compared to \$36.3 billion in the first three months of the year. Growth was the weakest since the economy expanded 0.1 per cent in the fourth quarter of 1991.

Canada cuts interest rates in bid to boost slow economy

TORONTO (R) — Canada's central bank chopped short-term rates for the seventh time this summer in a bid to spur lagging consumer demand and boost the country's sluggish economy, prompting major banks to cut their prime lending rates.

The Bank of Canada lowered its target range for the key overnight rate by a quarter of a percentage point to 6.0-6.50 per cent.

Canada's six major banks matched the move with a quarter of a percentage point cut in their prime rates.

The Royal Bank of Canada cut its prime rate to 6.75 per cent, down from 7.00 per cent in June. The Bank of Nova Scotia, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce, Toronto-Dominion Bank and the National Bank of Canada all cut their prime rates to 6.75 per cent from 7.00 per cent, effective Tuesday. The cuts last cut their prime rates, charged on loans to their best customers, on July 12.

Analysts and economists said lower interest rates were expected and needed because

Canada's economy remains anemic, while a potentially destabilising Quebec referendum on partial separation from the rest of Canada is fast approaching. They said a sharp rise in the value of the Canadian dollar over the past week set the stage for the Bank of Canada easing.

"The rate cut was pretty much expected given that we had some excellent inflation news last week, the economy remains quite weak and the Canadian dollar has been very strong," said Warren Jestin, chief economist at the Bank of Nova Scotia.

Canada's consumer price index rose 2.5 per cent in July on a year-over-year basis, down from 2.7 per cent in June and is expected to edge lower for the rest of the year.

"With unemployment still running around 9.8 per cent, I don't think inflation will be a concern," said Paul Ferley, assistant chief economist at the Bank of Montreal.

Higher interest rates and slow job growth have long kept Canada's beleaguered consumers out of the market for goods and services. Retail

sales rose 0.6 per cent in June, but Statistics Canada warned that early indications for the July number were "not encouraging."

"The lower rates certainly help to give a bit of a shot in the arm, but I don't think consumers will be going on a spending spree," Scotiabank's Jestin said.

He noted that Canadian consumers have record debt levels relative to their incomes while job creation has been "minimal" this year. Mr. Jestin predicted continued slow economic growth for the rest of 1995.

But Sherry Cooper, chief economist at Nesbitt Burns, said lower interest rates will help a rebound in consumer demand, and attract more foreign investors to Canada.

"There is no question that international confidence in Canada seems to be increasing," she said. "Our fundamentals have been very positive for some time and there seems to be a little more confidence that Canada will come through the Quebec referendum unscathed."

India puts on record export growth

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India achieved record export growth of 29.5 per cent during the first four months of fiscal 1995-96, Commerce Minister Palaniappan Chidambaram said.

Mr. Chidambaram said "excellent" exports during April-July indicated the pace could be maintained to record overseas sales of \$30 billion at the end of current financial year on March 31, 1996.

"We will make every effort and leave no stones unturned to keep the pace," Mr. Chidambaram told top Indian exporters in Bombay.

The government has said Indian exports should maintain an annual growth rate of 20 per cent to help the

domestic market recapture the 1.6 per cent of world trade the country held three and a half decades ago.

Urging industry to concentrate on quality-added products to boost overseas sales, the minister said relaxed trading laws and lower tariffs should help India retain its present high-speed export growth.

"The country has come a long way since four years ago, when there were import compressions and export credit was not available... It is a matter of great satisfaction now," he said.

Mr. Chidambaram, however, voiced fears that other European countries may follow Germany's ban on Indian textiles because of the use of

certain banned chemicals here, and said the domestic industry should find substitutes.

"Together, we will fund research on substitutes for dyes and chemicals that the world thinks are harmful," Mr. Chidambaram said.

India liberalised its 1995-96 export-import policy to achieve around \$30 billion in exports and imports of up to \$32 billion to leave a narrow trade deficit during the present fiscal year which began

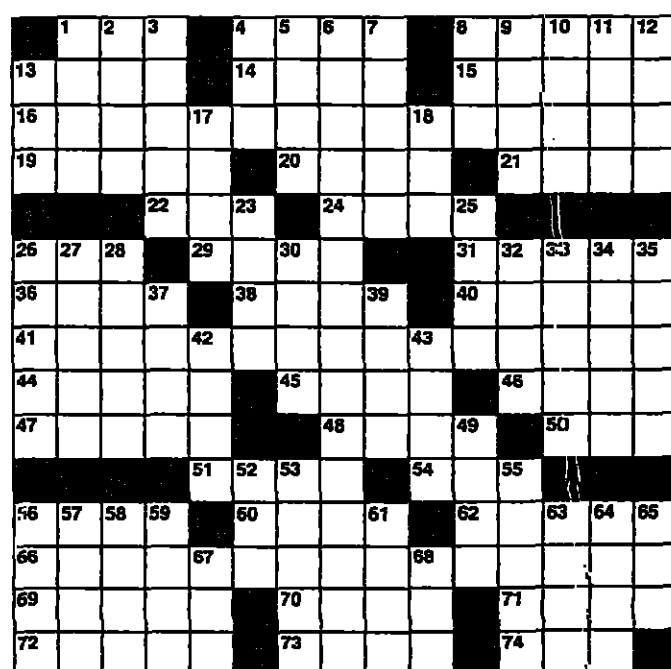
April 1.

The thrust of the liberalised export-import policy is aimed at assisting export-oriented businesses in India to import critical items to meet their quality-added overseas sales commitments.

India launched sweeping structural reforms in June 1991 to dismantle four decades of quasi-socialist economic insulation in a bid to expand exports and lure foreign capital into the country's market of 900 million people.

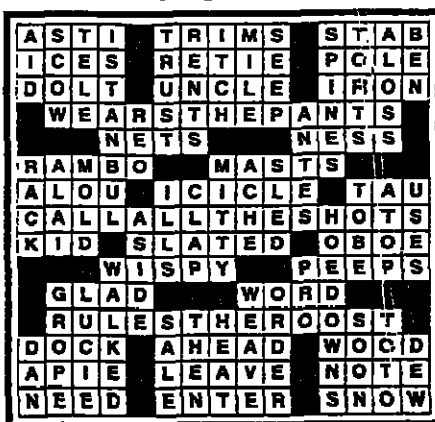
THE Daily Crossword by Roger Jurgovan

- ACROSS
- 1 Corner's letters
 - 4 Exclamation of concern
 - 8 Vends
 - 13 A company of thieves
 - 14 Drug plant
 - 15 A company of scouts
 - 16 Skein, perhaps
 - 19 Particular mode
 - 20 Hook's crosby
 - 21 Fret
 - 22 Shade tree
 - 24 — and cons
 - 26 Govt. org.
 - 29 Heroic tale
 - 31 Crunchy
 - 36 Latvian capital
 - 38 Color
 - 40 Distinctive qualities
 - 41 Slothy
 - 44 Christmas song
 - 45 Aria
 - 46 FBI or ERA
 - 47 Obliterate
 - 48 Agitated condition
 - 50 Nav. off.
 - 51 Second son
 - 54 — Cruces
 - 56 Former TV host
 - 60 Potpourri
 - 62 Browned bread
 - 66 Pod
 - 69 Companies of badgers
 - 70 Poop
 - 71 A company of wolves
 - 72 Soothes
 - 73 Essential being
 - 74 At this time



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Yesterday's puzzle solved:



- DOWN
- 1 Foolish
 - 2 Sole
 - 3 Nimble
 - 4 Alas, in Berlin
 - 5 Oodles
 - 6 Pride
 - 7 More secure
 - 8 Certain vessel: abbr.
 - 9 God of love
 - 10 Stupid one
 - 11 Misplace
 - 12 Eject
 - 13 Talk excessively
 - 17 Congeals
 - 18 Earth: pref.
 - 23 — Han
 - 25 Wound reminder
 - 26 Hint
 - 27 Cleric
 - 28 Marketplace in old Greece
 - 30 Snarls
 - 32 Regrets
 - 33 Seething
 - 34 Plastic wrap
 - 35 Nudniks
 - 37 Biblical prophet
 - 39 Cost
 - 42 Entreaty
 - 43 Filly or colt
 - 49 Trail
 - 52 Jeering word
 - 53 Miss — of "Dallas"
 - 55 Full of suds
 - 56 Step
 - 57 Lost
 - 58 Play parts
 - 59 Korean president, once
 - 61 Switch positions
 - 63 Wings
 - 64 Order
 - 65 Word of dismay
 - 67 CIA, formerly
 - 68 Sorrow



"They say everyone has an inner child. Mine has been using my intestines for a jump rope!"

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME
by Henri Arnold and Mike Arginton

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

DEESU
VEALE
HUGONE
CADDIN

Nobody ever thought of this plot before.

THIS CAN MAKE A WRITER HAPPY.

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

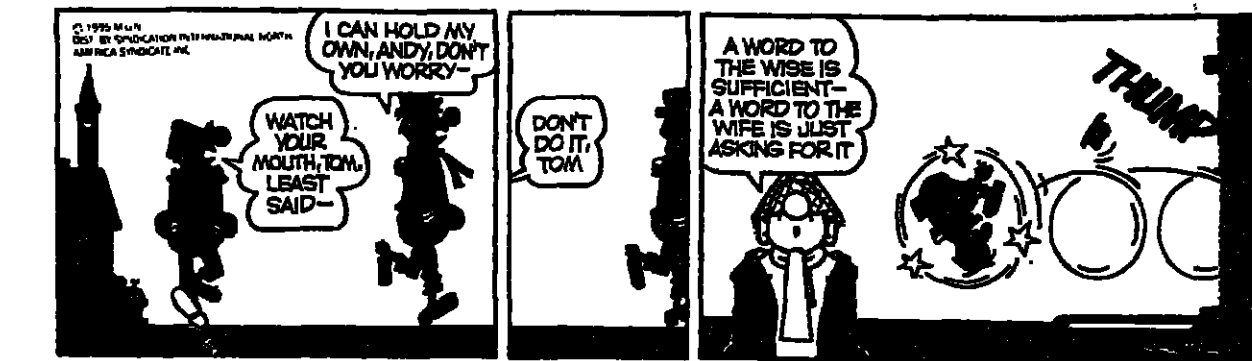
Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: BULGY SANDY HANGAR ZINNIA
Answer: How the late trains left the commuters — "RAILING"

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n' Jeff



HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, AUGUST 31, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) In the morning find a better way of using your practical talents so that you can increase your income then later tonight rest up.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) This is a good morning for coming to a better understanding with a fellow associate by having a wise discussion.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) You can cement better relations with a partner if you take a firm stand and do not listen to fellow associates.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) By talking to an expert you can learn about extra benefits which can come to you today. Be kind.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Find new gadgets which can make living at home less tiring and more charming. Then tonight get out for the pleasure you like.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21) Do whatever is necessary to improve your state of health this morning. Then plan amusements for tonight very wisely.

LIBRA: (September 22 to October 21) Set up appointments early this morning with those you like for this evening, but tonight be very careful in handling some money matter of importance.

SCORPIO: (October 22 to November 21) You can gain the aid of good friends this morning, but forget your worries later tonight and make big headway.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Have a secret talk with a bigwig and garner the information you require for a new project today for greater success.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Get together with good friends in going after new interests today and you succeed very quickly in a new assignment.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Study how you can gain greater prestige this morning, and then take the right steps in that direction.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Talking over financial affairs with your loved ones is wise this morning, but later tonight avoid some group.

Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 1, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Early you should schedule your assignment load, and then carry through with it without deviating. Find some new method for increasing your vitality.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Find new ways of getting your talents working more efficiently, but later be more economical in all of your activities today.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Early get some important matter handled at home and later show poise in handling tasks in the outside world.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Communicate with others this morning and be certain your manner with partners is gentle and kind. Much care must be exercised in driving or walking.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Early handling of financial affairs is wise and later do not take on any more obligations than you can handle easily.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 21) Get started on your personal plans early this morning since later today conditions are apt to be difficult. Postpone any appointments until later.

LIBRA: (September 22 to October 21) Plan today widely and carry through though you may encounter distractions this evening. Handle the tasks which will give you more free time.

SCORPIO: (October 22 to November 21) Look to a good friend for the assistance you need this morning since you find acquaintances are not reliable.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Get outside tasks handled this morning, and don't get upset later if a higher-up upbraid you without cause or reason.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) You get an idea early today but later you see the flaws in it, so put it aside for a while and pick it up another day when there are more benefits.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Try to please your mate this morning, and then handle your duties efficiently and conscientiously so there is great progress.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Have long talks today with a partner so that the relationship is upgraded and there will be greater benefits for you tomorrow.

Birthstone of September: Sapphire — Lapis Lazuli

business daily beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Value of new shares at AFM's primary market total JD 198.9m

THE TOTAL value of new shares issued at the primary market of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) during the first seven months of this year reached JD 198.9 million, 10.8 per cent higher than the JD 179.5 million recorded during the same period of last year. New companies accounted for 82.5 per cent of the total value, or JD 164.2 million while the value of new issues by established companies amounted to JD 24.7 million (Al Aswaq).

THE COUNCIL of Ministers authorised the Telecommunications Corporation to issue \$50 million of bonds to be presented by two foreign banks and having the guarantee of the World Bank. The funds will partially finance the cost of the national telecommunications programme and the settlement of the bonds will be made in one payment in the year 2002. The Cabinet also approved classifying 29 projects, with investments totalling JD 145 million and providing 2,969 employment opportunities, as "certified economic projects" and five projects, with JD 2.5 million in investments and providing 200 employment opportunities, as "other economic projects." Other Cabinet decisions included the approval of buying 200,000 tonnes of barley from Syria, allowing the civil and military consumer corporations to sell school copybooks to all citizens and appointing Naser Madadiah as director general of the Government Tenders Directorate replacing George Haddad who was pensioned (Al Ra'i).

ACCORDING TO the monthly statistical report issued by the Directorate of Companies at the Ministry of Industry and Trade, a total of 395 companies, with an overall capital of JD 17.35 million, were registered during last month compared to 377 companies with a capital of JD 19.1 million, registered during the same month of last year (Al Dustour).

THE FREE Zones Corporation is offering for rent some plots of land to be used for setting up industrial projects on them. The plots are in the new industrial area at the Zarqa free zone which has complete infrastructure services. Interested investors should apply within the coming 10 days (Al Ra'i).

THE INDUSTRIAL Development Bank granted 37 loans amounting to JD 7.3 million in the second quarter of this year. Industrial loans were spread over 24 borrowers with the chemical sector getting four credits for JD 1.5 million and the equipment and metal fixtures sector getting five credits for another JD 1.5 million. Plastic industries benefited from four loans amounting to JD 0.9 million while the remaining JD 1.3 million were lent to other food, textile and non-metal industries. In the tourism sector, eight projects were given a total of JD 1.8 million. The service sector benefited from five loans amounting to JD 145,000. As such, the bank's operations during the first six months of this year translate into a total of 67 loans for JD 10.6 million compared to 68 loans for JD 15.4 million during the first half of last year. In another activity the bank disbursed JD 198,300 credits to 30 handicraft establishment during the first half of 1995 compared to JD 98,625 to 133 establishment in the first half of 1994. The sharp drop was attributed to reorganisational procedures in the area of handicraft lending (Al Ra'i).

Officials order suspension of Japan's largest credit union

TOKYO (AP) — Just three days after the government announced a plan to dissolve a financially troubled Tokyo credit union, officials Wednesday ordered the suspension of another one, the nation's largest.

Separately, the government announced a radical reorganisation of Hyogo Bank, a troubled institution based in Kobe in western Japan.

The news of the reorganisation and of the suspension of Osaka's Kizu Credit Union because of massive bad debts raised questions once again about the health

of Japan's debt-laden banking industry.

But Finance Minister Masayoshi Takemura told reporters that further bank failures were unlikely.

"I stand here today with the feeling that with this, the worst is behind us," he said.

The governor of Osaka, which has jurisdiction over Kizu, ordered the suspension of the credit union's operations. It has unrecoverable non-performing loans of as much as 600 billion yen (\$6.1 billion), against deposits of a little more than one trillion yen (\$10 billion), news reports said.

"The situation at the smaller financial institution level is becoming more critical," says James Fiorillo, a banking analyst at Baring Securities (Japan) Ltd.

"The possibility that this could lead to a domino effect cannot be overlooked," he said.

Analysts said the chances of a financial collapse were very small. But Jim McGinnis, a senior analyst with Schroder Securities (Japan) Ltd., cautioned that people might withdraw funds from other credit unions in response to Kizu's failure. Japanese banks hold at

least 40 trillion yen (\$408 billion) in non-performing loans, according to finance ministry officials.

Many of those loans were extended during Japan's "bubble economy" in the late 1980s, when easy money led to massive speculation in stocks and real estate. But property prices collapsed after the bursting of the economic bubble in the early 1990s.

Government officials deny that Japan's financial system is in danger of collapse but say drastic steps are needed over the next five years to restore health to the banking sector.

Bank of Japan Governor Yasuo Matsuoka said the central bank will liquidate Hyogo Bank, a leading regional bank, and set up a new institution to absorb its operations.

The central bank will provide funds for the new institution to dispose of the non-performing loans, he said.

On Monday, the finance ministry and the Bank of Japan announced details of a plan to dissolve Cosmo Credit Corp., the biggest credit union in Tokyo and the fifth largest in Japan.

Cosmo suspended operations Aug. 1 after depositors rushed to withdraw their

funds following reports that it had some 235 billion yen (\$2.4 billion) in bad loans, mostly in real estate.

Finance Minister Takemura said the government's priority in dealing with the failed institutions was to protect depositors and maintain the stability of the financial system.

Mr. Takemura emphasised that a ministry advisory panel is considering ways to deal with the bad debts held by banks. That panel is expected to issue a preliminary report late next month.

Credit unions in Japan are smaller-scale institutions than banks and are overseen by

local governments rather than the central government.

Long lines of people waited outside Kizu branches after news of the credit union's troubles surfaced Wednesday afternoon. Most depositors will be able to withdraw their money despite suspension of other operations, officials said.

Last week, Moody's, an American credit-rating firm, put many Japanese banks in the bottom two categories in its rankings of banks as independent institutions — without regard for their links with other institutions or the traditional safety net provided by the finance ministry.

Time Warner in mega-bid for Turner Broadcasting

NEW YORK (AP) — Time Warner Inc. and Turner Broadcasting System Inc. (TBS) Wednesday said they were holding merger talks in a potential deal that would create the world's biggest media and entertainment group.

Earlier media reports had said Time Warner was offering some \$8.5 billion for TBS, which includes Cable News Network.

"Discussions concern an exchange of Time Warner stock for Turner Broadcasting stock, following which Turner Broadcasting System would become a wholly-owned subsidiary of Time Warner Inc.," the companies said in a statement.

"Significant issues remain to be negotiated and there can be no assurance that agreement will be reached or

a transaction consummated," they added.

The New York Times and Wall Street Journal said Turner Broadcasting founder Ted Turner was examining the deal, which would leave him at the helm of a new unit of the media giant.

If the deal were accepted, it would create a media-entertainment colossus with revenues approaching \$19 billion, surpassing the combined turnover of Walt Disney Company and Capital Cities, which have agreed to a merger.

News of the offer surprised markets here, as earlier rumours had suggested Time Warner was rather looking to selling back to Turner Broadcasting System its 18 per cent stake in the company.

According to the terms of the proposed merger, Time

Warner would purchase the 81 per cent of Turner it does not already own by issuing 189 million new shares. Turner shareholders would receive seven-tenths to eight-tenths of one share in Time Warner in return for each Turner share.

The Atlanta, Georgia-based Turner would become a subsidiary of Time Warner, with Ted Turner becoming vice chairman of Time Warner and Turner Broadcasting receiving two seats on Time Warner's board, the reports said.

The New York Post and USA Today also reported negotiations on the deal and said Time Warner chairman Gerald Levin would head the combined company.

One potential stumbling block in the deal, according to the Times, is Tele-

communications Inc., the largest cable systems operator in the United States, which owns 21 per cent of Turner shares, giving it the power to veto the deal.

The proposed merger would be the third major deal in the media business this year, surpassing Walt Disney's \$19 billion deal to buy Capital Cities/ABC Inc. and dwarfing Westinghouse Electric Corp. \$5.4 billion bid for CBS Inc.

The merger would immediately bring the new company into a leading role in Hollywood, with Warner Brothers and Turner's New Line Cinema and Castle Rock Entertainment combined under one roof.

Turner Broadcasting also operates the Cable News Network, Headline News and TBS SuperStation.

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at mid-session on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Wednesday.

One U.S. dollar	1.3408/18	Canadian dollar	1.4758/68
	1.6540/50	Deutsche marks	1.2142/52
	30.34/38	Dutch guilders	3.0730/80
	1629.36/4	Swiss francs	1.2142/52
	98.76/86	Belgian francs	33.36/46
	7.3240/40	French francs	162.93/03
	6.4500/50	Italian lire	1936.00/00
	5.7240/90	Japanese yen	160.00/00
		Swedish crowns	13.76/06
		Norwegian crowns	13.76/06
		Danish crowns	13.76/06

One Sterling \$1.5448/58
One ounce of gold \$381.90/382.30

Financial Markets

Jordan Times in cooperation with Cairo Amman Bank

Currency	New York Close	Tokyo Close
Sterling Pound	1.5435	1.5425**
Deutsche Mark	1.4773	1.4768
Swiss Franc	1.2144	1.2138**
French Franc	5.0845	5.0835**
Japanese Yen	98.10	98.33
European Currency Unit	1.2653	1.2648**

* And 1/2 %
** Forward Premium 1/2 % in 1995

European Currency Interest Rates

Date: 30/8/1995

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTH	6 MTH	12 MTH
U.S. Dollar	5.65	5.65	5.65	5.65
Sterling Pound	6.50	6.56	6.62	6.68
Deutsche Mark	4.06	4.06	4.06	4.06
Swiss Franc	2.68	2.68	2.68	2.68
French Franc	5.62	5.56	5.56	5.56
Japanese Yen	0.66	0.62	0.62	0.65
European Currency Unit	5.58	5.62	5.62	5.68

Source: Reuters. All rates for overnight borrowing U.S. Dollars 1/8% and 1/4%.

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Date: 30/8/1995

Currency	Buy	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.7120	0.7140
Sterling Pound	1.0887	1.0942
Deutsche Mark	0.4815	0.4839
Swiss Franc	0.5645	0.5677
French Franc	0.1399	0.1406
Japanese Yen	0.7241	0.7277
Dutch Guilder	0.4299	0.4320
Swedish Krona	0.5435	0.5457
Italian Lira	0.5435	0.5457
Belgian Franc	0.5435	0.5457

* Per 100

Other Currencies

Date: 30/8/1995

Currency	Buy	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.5740	1.5875
Libanese Lira	0.002600	0.002600
Saudi Riyal	0.1925	0.1910
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.2900	2.3250
Qatari Riyal	0.1965	0.1958
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2110
Omani Riyal	1.4429	1.4520
UAE Dirham	0.1932	0.1943
Greek Drachma	0.2875	0.3375
Cypriot Pound	1.5530	1.6330

* Per 100

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U.S. Open

Agassi and Graf win, Tarango trounced

NEW YORK (R) — Top seeds Andre Agassi and Steffi Graf were both winners Tuesday at the U.S. Open tennis championships, but they offered contrasting slants on the old confidence game at 1995's last Grand Slam.

Agassi, who began a meteoric rise to the top of the rankings after winning the Open last year as an unseeded player, showed he is still riding high by trouncing hard-serving Bryan Shelton 6-2, 6-2, 6-2 in a mere 81 minutes on the stadium court.

"I am executing with total confidence," said Agassi. "I would have to say that at this stage, I am playing my best tennis ever on hard court."

Agassi was ranked 20th entering last year's tournament as he battled back from wrist surgery and made the adjustment to his new coach, Brad Gilbert.

Since then, the flamboyant American has posted an awesome 88-10 match record, including 20 wins in a row.

"To be back out where it all started for me, it was a great feeling," said world number one Agassi, who is unbeaten on hard courts this summer with four tournament titles to his credit.

Graf, the French and Wimbledon champion who has lost only once this year, avenged her lone 1995 defeat

by beating South African Amanda Coetzer, but the 6-7 6-1 6-3 see-saw victory was a struggle.

The German admitted that personal distractions and her ailing back had affected her performance.

"I haven't been able to practice that much because of my back," said Graf, who took two hours and 15 minutes to beat the pesky opponent who ruined her perfect 32-0 record this year with a first-round win earlier this month in Toronto.

"I definitely lack confidence," said Graf.

Already burdened by the highly-publicized tax evasion scandal that has landed her father in jail, Graf admitted she has also been bothered by reporters stalking out her apartment in the Soho district of Manhattan following a report she was being stalked by a middle-aged woman.

"Obviously, at certain times I have difficulty concentrating out there," lamented Graf.

In even worse share was the tormented Jeff Tarango, who sleep-walked his way to a 6-0, 6-4, 7-5 first-round defeat to seventh-seeded Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov.

Tarango, who was fined more than \$60,000 stemming from his infamous Wimbledon tirade against an umpire and subsequent walk-out, said he was so disturbed by

the punishments following that incident he was considering quitting the circuit.

"I am taking two sleeping pills every night and I still am not getting any sleep, so I don't know what to do," Tarango said after fizzling in his 85-minute grandstand court match.

"I go to the chiropractor three times a week and he says I am so stressed out, he can't even turn my neck."

Tarango said he was "a victim, used and abused," and could not go on playing with that kind of mental attitude.

"I love tennis, so maybe I will play in my backyard. I know (Jim) Courier and Pete (Sampras) and Patrick (McEnroe) and all my friends will come and play with me in my backyard."

Among those still playing their trade at the National Tennis Centre were second-seeded Wimbledon champion Pete Sampras, who nearly matched Agassi in efficiency by smashing Fernando Meligeni of Brazil 6-0 6-3 6-1.

Others joining Sampras and Agassi into the second round included 13th seed Marc Rosset of Switzerland, a 6-7 6-3 6-1 6-0 winner over Italian Andrea Gaudenzi.

1993 Open runnerup Cedric Pioline of France, who beat Dutchman Sjeng Schalken 6-4 7-5 6-1, and Swiss veteran Jakob Hlasek, a 6-3 4-6 6-4

6-2 victor over Germany's Alexander Mronz.

Iva Majoli, the 13th seed from Croatia, became the first women's seed to fall, losing to Austrian Barbara Paulus 6-1 6-1 to mar an otherwise orderly procession into the second round.

Seeds advancing included Czech Jana Novotna, seeded fifth, Kimiko Date on Japan (7), American Lindsay Davenport (10), Germany's Anke Huber (11), Natashia Zvereva of Belarus (12), American Mary Joe Fernandez (14) and Brenda Schultz-McCarthy of the Netherlands (16).

U.S. Open notebook

No. 1-ranked Andre Agassi doesn't agree with former No. 1 John McEnroe that a great rivalry must thrive on and off the court.

Agassi and No. 2-ranked Pete Sampras have had tense duels across the net, but away from tennis they enjoy a good friendship.

When Sampras turned 24 this month during the ATP Championships in Cincinnati, the two players and their entourages celebrated together.

"I think John is the kind of guy that likes a lot of tension in a lot of relationships in his life," Agassi said. "I'm just not quite sure he is easy with anything being easy. He nev-

er stayed in the same hotel with Jimmy Connors and there is a downside to that, too. It is unfortunate because I just think it reflects poorly on what this game is about."

Agassi has his own opinion on what makes a great tennis rivalry.

"The only thing that reflects a top-level rivalry or not is how often you play and is there the contrast in styles," Agassi said. "A contrast in games, contrast in personalities, and are they enjoyable matches."

Why bother? Monica Seles already has received a special wild card into the season-ending WTA Tour championship at Madison Square Garden in November.

The question is whether she will need the special consideration.

Seles, who has earned 470 points for winning the Canadian Open two weeks ago, could earn enough points in three months to qualify for the championships without special dispensation. In the past, a player who amasses approximately 1,400 points has made it into the 16-player draw.

If Seles wins the U.S. Open, she would earn 900 points. A three-time winner of the year-ending championships (1990-92), Seles could earn 630 points as a U.S. Open singles runner-up and 400 points for a semifinal showing.

Doing business: A survey of 275 fans attending opening day of the U.S. Open Monday found that half of the spectators will list their tennis tickets as a business expense.

The survey, done by quicken expensable survey, found that 52 per cent of the people questioned will file their tennis tickets as a business expense, 29 per cent personally paid for their tickets and 18 per cent were attending the Open as a guest.

No luck Gaudenzi: Italy's Andrea Gaudenzi is ranked No. 20 in the world, but has never won an ATP Tour title.

That won't change at this year's U.S. Open: Gaudenzi lost 6-7 (3-7), 6-3, 6-1, 6-0 to No. 13 Marc Rosset in the first round Tuesday.

Gaudenzi has been in three career finals - in 1994 in Stuttgart, Germany, and in 1995 in San Marino and Dubai.

Last year, Gaudenzi upset Jim Courier en route to the U.S. Open third round.

Tour booth: the WTA Tour may be without a sponsor, but it has a new fan booth at the U.S. Open.

Fans are treated to autographs by players. They can also enter daily draws for WTA tour T-shirts, vote in award for the most exciting player, attempt to win tickets to the season-ending WTA Tour Championships, view a photo display and pick up literature on the 1996 Tour.



Amanda Coetzer, from South Africa, follows through on a serve to opponent Steffi Graf during their first round U.S. Open match in

New York on Tuesday. Graf defeated Coetzer 6-7, 6-1, 6-4 (Reuters photo)

Date leads rise by Asian women

NEW YORK (AFP) — Kimiko Date leads Asia's rising women's tennis stars here at the U.S. Open, with the seventh seed from Japan confident she can compete with favorites Monica Seles and Steffi Graf.

"I'm putting all my focus on the second week," Date said. "I'm pretty sure I won't get any easy matches. That's the big difference between me and Monica or Steffi Graf."

Tougher tests early might give Date an edge on those top seeds. Date played well in beating Germany's Silke Meier 6-0, 2-6, 6-2, in a first-round match Tuesday.

"The first set I was concentrating very well and in the second set I had a little lapse," said Date, who next faces American Lisa Raymond.

"I'm really satisfied with my position. This year I'm very pleased with my results. But I can't be too satisfied. I want to improve my position."

Date has taken time for such enjoyable tasks as filming a Japanese television commercial for the National Basketball Association. But her busy schedule has taken a toll. Date rested for most of the past two months in Europe.

"I was physically and mentally tired and had to rest," Date said. "Now my health is good, body and mind. I am gradually getting my pace back."

Six of eight Japanese women advanced to the second round of the \$9.86 million Grand Slam event, the highest total of any nation

except the host United States.

Joining Date in the second round were Mana Endo, Yone Kamio, Ai Sugiyama, Naoko Sawamatsu and Naoko Kijimuta. Other top Asians were ousted Tuesday, including Indonesia's Yayuk Basuki, South Korea's Park Sung Hee and Min Tang, Hong Kong's first U.S. Open player.

Date credits success for Asian players on several factors, including their opportunity to improve by playing each other and the benefits of having older players serve as pioneers in world travel.

"Players who are a little older played around the world. That gave us a chance to go around the world without as much trouble," she said. "That is the basis for the players who are doing well in this generation."

Having men match the women's success will be more difficult until more Asian men are able to play consistently at the world level, Date said.

"The gap is really big in the men's and women's level," she said. "It's hard to say how long it will take. Some of the men can't even get into the main draws. Once they do that, it will be very soon when they are playing at a higher level."

Date, who turns 25 in September, plans to play in only two more events this year — the \$430,000 Nichirei tournament in Tokyo in September and the \$2 million WTA Championships here in November.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Hao makes China's first overseas move

BEIJING (AFP) — Hao Haidong was set to become the first Chinese player to join a top overseas club by signing for Uruguayan side Penarol. The Chinese Football Association confirmed on Wednesday it had agreed a transfer request by Penarol. "Hao is a member of Army side and it's now a matter for the two clubs," said the official who refused to reveal the transfer fee. Penarol spotted Hao on their recent Chinese tour when they drew 0-0 and then lost 3-2 to the Chinese national side last week when the midfielder opened the score. "This player was the revelation of our tour," a Penarol official told the Sports Daily.

Futre faces arrest

LISBON (AFP) — Portuguese football star Paulo Futre could be arrested as a deserter when he returns from Italy where he plays for AC Milan. Jornal de Noticias de Porto said on Wednesday Futre had 30 days to sort out his position after failing to report to an army recruiting post. He has postponed doing his national service since 1987 and the army said no more allowances could be made.

NHL approves rule change

DENVER (AP) — The National Hockey League went on the offensive Tuesday in an attempt to keep games from being bogged down by clutching and grabbing. The League's 26 general managers unanimously approved a rule change intended to crack down on obstruction, which has become a seldom-called defensive tactic used to slow down an offensive player. The obstruction committee — comprised of senior NHL officials, general managers,

coaches and referees — added a "note" to rule 62(a), which deals with players who interfere with a non-puck carrier. While not intended to reduce "legal body contact," the amendment calls for "strict enforcement" of a minor penalty for players who restrain an opponent who does not have possession of the puck.

Platt to undergo knee surgery

LONDON (R) — England captain David Platt is to undergo surgery on Thursday to repair a torn cartilage in his right knee. Platt will miss England's friendly international against Colombia at Wembley next Wednesday as well as a minimum of two Premier League games for Arsenal. Arsenal manager Bruce Rioch revealed Platt's injury after the midfielder scored a sensational goal in the 1-1 league draw against Nottingham Forest at Highbury on Tuesday. "He did it in training the day before we played Inter Milan in a pre-season friendly three weeks ago and now we are going to lose him for two games at least although the doctors say he could be back in training inside 10 days," said Rioch.

Prost to make test comeback Thursday

LONDON (R) — Four times world champion Alain Prost is set to make his return to Formula One action in a test session for McLaren at Silverstone on Thursday, a team spokesman confirmed on Tuesday. "It will be a comfort run, not a full performance test," team spokesman Jocelyne Bia said. Prost's first full test is not expected to take place with the team until after the Italian Grand Prix at Monza on Sept. 10.

Bubka to leave Berlin

BERLIN (AFP) — World champion pole vaulter Sergey Bubka is leaving Berlin in September to set up home in Monte Carlo, German athletics official Rudi Thiel said here on Tuesday. Thiel added finding sponsors in Berlin had been difficult so the Ukrainian's family, brother and coach were ending their three-year stay in the capital.

Former Swedish ski chief dies

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Bjorn Kjellstrom, whose decision to clear Jean-Claude Killy of breaking the amateur rules allowed the French skiing hero to keep his three Olympic gold medals in 1968, died on Tuesday. Kjellstrom was president of the Swedish Ski Federation from 1948 to 1952 and vice-president of the International Ski Federation from 1951 to 1979. He was 84. Kjellstrom was chairman of the FIS eligibility committee in 1968 when Killy was accused of being paid.

Teams may be allowed 3 cars

LONDON (R) — Formula One's leading Grand-Prix racing teams may be allowed to enter three cars instead of two in the 1996 World Championship, Bernie Ecclestone said on Tuesday. Ecclestone, president of the Formula One Constructors' Association (FOCA) and vice-president of the ruling body, the International Motoring Federation (FIA), said rule changes to allow for three cars instead of two were being considered. "I think it is a good idea and it looks as if it will happen. It is being talked about and it could be decided after the Italian Grand Prix at Monza (on Sep. 10)." This season, there are only 12 teams with two cars in the World Championship.

Moenchengladbach lead, Dortmund lose to Rostock

BONN (AFP) — Borussia Moenchengladbach took provisional pole position in the German championship on Tuesday, despite visitors Leverkusen ending their 100 per cent record with a goalless draw.

Champions Dortmund, surely a fading force on early results, choked at Hamburg side Hansa Rostock to let a two-goal lead slip and lose 3-2.

Promoted Rostock were supposed to be odds-on for readmittance to division two, but no one told coach Frank Fagelsdorf or his players.

Ruben Sosa scored twice in the first half to confirm Ottmar Hitzfeld's impeccable judgement in bringing the Uruguayan international striker to Dortmund from Inter Milan.

Stefan Beinlich pulled one back for Rostock on the stroke of half-time, Poland's Slawomir Chalasiewicz equalised with

seven minutes to go, and, agonisingly for Dortmund, Martin Groth hit an 89th minute winner for fourth spot.

With two weeks to go before their first Champions League match, Borussia have yet to win in three Bundesliga matches and are out of the top 10.

Werder Bremen, 1992/93 champions, won their first match thanks to Marco Bode's 57th minute effort, but Sankt Pauli's 100 per cent record took a nosedive with a 2-1 home loss to Kaiserslautern.

Rampant Czech Pavel Kuka was twice on target for Kaiserslautern in the first half, though Pauli's Russian Yuri Savichev reduced the deficit.

Austria's Anton Polster hit two goals for Cologne in their 3-2 win over Hamburg in a battle between two clubs who have faded markedly since the early 80's.

TODAY AT	CINEMA TEL: 634144 PHILADELPHIA JIM CARREY & AMY YAZBEK THE MASK Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL: 699238 PLAZA Adel Imam & Yusra Birds of the Darkness (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5, 6:45, 8:30, 10:30	CINEMA TEL: 677420 CONCORD CONCORD "1" Adel Imam & Yusra Birds of the Darkness (Arabic) Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:00, 8:15, 10:45 CONCORD "2" SPECIALIST Shows: 3:30, 5:30	AMMOUN THEATRE TEL: 618274 - 618275 MUSA HILJAZIN "Sumaa" IN Hi Citizen daily at 8:30 pm written & directed by Mohammed Shawaqfeh *****	Nabil Al Mashini Theatre TEL: 675571 Presents KABARET Abcer Issa Ghassan Mashini with Amer khamash, Khalil Jahmani, Mohammad Hussein and Issam Al Hanbali The theatre closes on Monday Performances start at 8:30 p.m.	Nabil & Hisham's Tel: 625155 AHLAN THEATRE presents (Ahlan Tatbee) Welcome Normalisation Shows start at 8:30 p.m. For reservation please call tel. 625155 Amman
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World University Games

Americans lead in medals race

FUKUOKA (AP) — Two Americans nearly tied for first in the men's 200-metre sprint Wednesday, keeping the United States barely ahead of Japan in the overall World University Games gold medals race.

Host Japan finished 1-2 in women's singles tennis for its only gold Wednesday as victories in the day's 10 events were spread among nine nations.

Only the Russians were double gold medal winners, with triumphs in the triple jump and men's epee fencing.

The Americans ended the day leading Japan 19-18 in golds and 56 to 51 in total medals.

China, with one gold in track Wednesday, had 10. Russia and Korea, which finished 1-2 in men's singles tennis, each had nine.

South Africa, Australia and Belgium also won track golds, while Taiwan triumphed in mixed doubles tennis.

In the men's 200 metres, Anthony Maybank edged fellow American David Dopek, 20.46 seconds to 20.47.

China's Du Xijie won the women's 200 in 22.53, with Russia's Oksana Diatchenko second in 22.89.

Two of Wednesday's winners had just come from track's world championships. South Africa's Hezekiel Sepeng, who said he missed the championships' final by relaxing too much at the end of his run, won the men's 800 in one minute, 47.87 seconds, just ahead of the 1:48.06 of Spain's Andres Diaz.

Here my plan was to go second for most of the race and go ahead in the last 50 metres," he added. "I didn't expect such a hard finish but the last 100 metres felt good."

Australia's Jane Jamieson, who was 14th in the World Championships, claimed the title of top all-around woman athlete at these games by winning the heptathlon.

She piled up 6,123 points in the seven events. Germany's Mona Steigauf was second with 6,102 and Russia's Irina Tikhonova third with 5,989.

Jamieson pulled ahead of

the field after the javelin throw, the sixth event, and then clinched the gold in the concluding 800-metre run.

"I had a really bad long jump and I knew I had to have a personal best in the 800. I did — by about a second," she said.

In the men's 110-metre hurdles, Belgium's Lulangu Nsenga was .08 second faster than American Brian Amos, winning the hurdles in 13.51. Poland's Krzysztof was third in 13.66.

Russia's Andrei Kouronoi won the triple jump with a leap of 17.30 metres. Armenia's Armen Martirosian went 16.82 and American Lamar Carter of Northwest Louisiana was third with 16.62.

In the all-Japanese women's singles tennis final, 12th seed Kaoru Shibata scored a 6-2, 6-2 victory over No. 2 seed Rika Hiraki, worn out from her doubles victory the previous day.

The second seed edged the first seed when Yoon Yong-II, playing patiently and retrieving well, beat fellow South Korean Lee Hyung-

Taik 6-4, 6-4 for the men's singles gold. He overcame 15-40 deficits while serving in the final game of each set.

Taiwan's Chen Chih-Jung and Wang Shi-Ting, the top seeds, edged Britain's Paul Robinson and Samantha Smith 7-6 (7-5), 4-6, 6-4 in the mixed doubles final.

Russia's second gold of the day came when Pavel Kolobkov edged Italy's Paolo Milani 15-14 for the men's epee fencing title.

But Japan edged the Russians 1-0 in soccer, advancing to the final against South Korea, a 3-1 winner over Ukraine.

The U.S. basketball team, seeking its fourth consecutive gold medal, had to overcome a 46-43 halftime deficit to beat the Czech Republic 77-62.

The Americans, who already had clinched a semi-final berth, will play Japan on Friday to decide which advances to the gold medal game. Japan beat Canada 98-93 on Wednesday.

The other semifinal matches Canada and the Czechs.

University games medals

	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
United States	19	22	15	56
Japan	18	13	20	51
China	10	6	14	30
Russia	9	9	16	34
South Korea	9	5	8	22
Bulgaria	5	4	2	11
Hungary	4	3	1	8
Cuba	3	3	3	9
Germany	3	3	4	10
South Africa	3	0	0	3
Brazil	2	5	2	9
Belarus	2	2	2	6
France	1	5	7	13
Italy	1	3	4	8
Ukraine	1	2	4	7
Australia	1	2	2	5
Romania	1	2	2	5
Slovakia	1	1	1	3
Mexico	1	1	1	3
Croatia	1	0	0	1
Belgium	1	0	0	1
Poland	0	2	4	6
Britain	0	2	4	6
Taiwan	0	1	1	2
Netherlands	0	1	1	2
Czech Republic	0	1	1	2
Spain	0	1	1	2
Kazakhstan	0	1	0	1
Yugoslavia	0	1	0	1
Armenia	0	1	0	1
Finland	0	0	1	1
Canada	0	0	1	1
Switzerland	0	0	1	1
Greece	0	0	1	1

GOREN BRIDGE

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FIRST THINGS FIRST

East-West vulnerable: South deals.

NORTH
AKQJ1052
AK86
Q98
A74

WEST EAST
AK6 4964
QJ1075 QVoid
Q9763 QJ10863
A552

SOUTH
A73
AKJ9542
QAK10
AK

The bidding:
SOUTH WEST NORTH EAST
10 Pass 10 Pass
30 Pass 50 Pass
50 Pass 50 Pass

Opening lead: Three of spades.

As we have often stated, few things make us leiser than a suit combination thrust upon us in isolation. The percentage play for that particular holding could be wrong in the context of the hand as a whole. Take the heart suit in this hand, for instance.

South faced a real problem. The hand was a bit too strong for three hearts, but the suit was rather porous. However, nothing better suggested itself, and so hearts was reached in rather quick time. West led a diamond, won in the closed hand. How would you tackle trumps, playing in your favorite rubber-bridge game? The answer is you don't know — yet. Before you can broach the trump suit, you need to know whether or not there's a spade loser in the hand.

At trick two, therefore, you should lead a spade and finesse the ten. If it loses, you can't afford to lose a trump as well, and with nothing better to guide you, the percentage play is to cash the ace and king and hope the queen comes tumbling down. As the cards lie, you are going down whatever you do.

But what if the spade finesse wins? Now you can afford to lose a trump trick, and should take a safety play to guard against a 4-0 division of the suit. First, lead a heart to the king. If West shows out, continue with a trump to the ace and a trump back. If East does not follow, lead a trump toward the A 8 and simply cover any card West produces. Either way, you can lose no more than one trump trick and the slam rolls home.

JORDAN TIMES

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Propaganda battle precedes NBA ballot

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — National Basketball Association players were trying to sort through a welter of conflicting claims Tuesday as they prepared to vote on a labour deal that could tear the league apart.

Voting was to begin Wednesday, with more voting scheduled for September 7 on whether to accept the proposed contract negotiated by the league and players union officials.

Renegade players led by Michael Jordan and Patrick Ewing have urged their colleagues to reject the plan, dissolve the union and take their demands to court.

If the proposal is rejected, the management lock-out will continue, threatening the start of the 1995-96 season.

Several marquee players, including Orlando Magic star Shaquille O'Neal and 1994-95 most valuable player David Robinson of San Antonio, have come out in favour of the deal. But Jordan remained adamant against it.

He said NBA commissioner David Stern knows the proposal is unfair to players.

"He wouldn't accept the deal," Jordan said of Stern. "Why would he ask the players to accept it?"

O'Neal acknowledged that the deal has drawbacks from the players' point of view. It imposes rookie salary limits, limits free agency and does away with so-called balloon payments lacked onto the end of contracts that allow clubs to make big payments to their stars despite the salary cap.

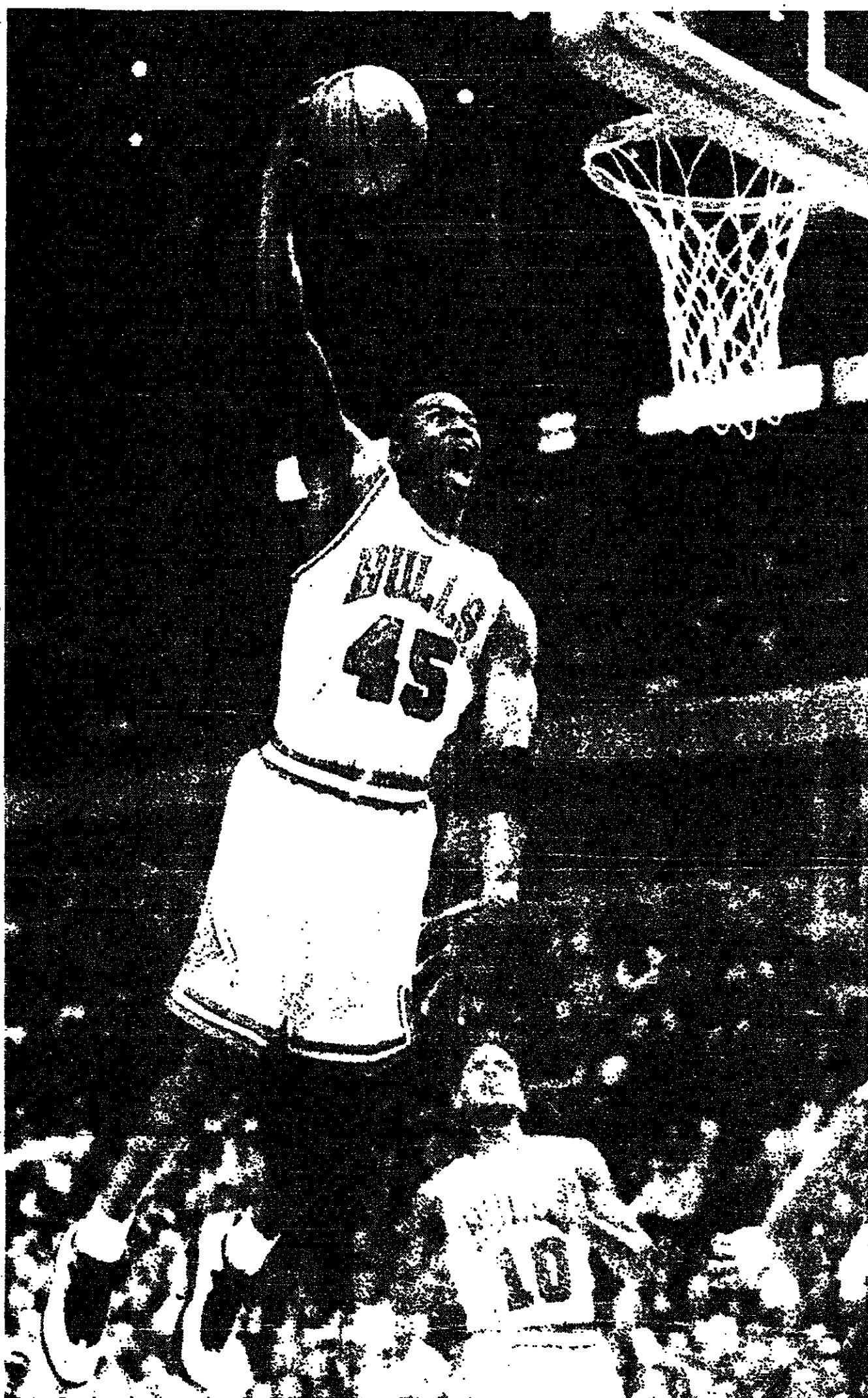
But he said it wasn't worth the risk of alienating fans by disrupting the season, noting the continuing fan discontent in the wake of the major league baseball strike.

Robinson said he had decided to vote for the new deal "after a lot of review and collecting a lot of propaganda from both sides."

"It was very difficult," he said. "Everybody has a different opinion and something at stake. It was very difficult to determine what people's motives were."

Utah's John Stockton and Karl Malone and Houston's Clyde Drexler have come out in favour of the agreement. Many players are still undecided.

Some 420 players are eligible to vote at 44 sites. The election will be overseen by the National Labour Relations Board, and the results will be announced in New York on September 12 after a public ballot count.



Chicago Bulls star Michael Jordan #23 is leading the players demand for a new labour deal. The current lock-out might postpone the start of the 1995-96 season (AFP photo)

PSG notch fifth consecutive victory

PARIS (AFP) — Paris Saint Germain's foreign tandem Dely Valdes and Rai continued their purple patch on Tuesday as PSG opened up a two-point gap at the top of the French championship.

PSG won 2-0 at Cannes as both Panamanian Valdes and Brazilian Rai found the net for the fifth straight win for the 1993-94 champions.

Revelations of the season Metz hung on to second place with a 1-1 draw at Lyon. Monaco moved up to third having beat Lille 2-1, and Lens ousted Rennes 1-0 to take fourth spot.

Perhaps the happiest man of the night was Rai, back from suspension after being sent off against Le Havre last week. He now jointly leads the scoring charts on six goals with Nantes Japhet N'Doram and Strasbourg's Marc Keller.

Youri Djorkaeff twice shot just over the bar in a goalless first half, but PSG came into their own during the second.

Panamanian Valdes took advantage of a bad clearance in the 59th minute to beat Cannes keeper Michel Dusuyer.

And Rai lobbed Dusuyer for the second in the 84th minute, again helped by a defensive mix-up allowing Vincent Guerin possession.

Metz went behind against Lyon when Florian Maurice converted from a 25-yard free-kick after being fouled by Didier Lang. But Cyrille Pouget equalised two minutes after the break by heading home a Jocelyn Blanchard cross.

Monaco crept up to a third spot following a colourless start thanks to Brazilian Anderson, who slotted home the winner in a 2-1 home win over Lille.

Tony Vairalles scored a messy goal for Lens during a goalmouth scramble to push them up from eighth to fourth in their 1-0 win over Rennes. Rennes, from Brittany, suffered their fourth loss in seven matches.

Marc Keller's effort in-off-

the-post in the last minute sealed fifth-placed Strasbourg's 2-0 win over Martini.

Gerald Batlle had converted the opener in the 71st minute.

Marc Keller's effort in-off-

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(D) Audits certain staff separation entitlements prior to payment.
(E) Assists Chief, Audit Office in planning a continuous programme of financial and operational audits to ensure the implementation of control procedures Agency-wide; reviews new and revised instructions when published.
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Juppe says security boosted

PARIS (AFP) — French Prime Minister Alain Juppe announced late Tuesday a boosting of police numbers in the wake of bomb attacks blamed on Algerian extremists, and denied that Paris supported the Algiers government.

Speaking in a television interview, Mr. Juppe said that the number of elite police CRS and gendarmic units had been increased from 22 to 31, while auxiliaries who had opted to do their military service in the police were being allowed to stay on afterwards if they wished.

Mr. Juppe estimated that this would make between 500 and 800 extra police available to combat the bombers.

An explosion in a Paris underground train on July 25 killed seven people and injured 117. A second blast in a refuse bin near the Arc de Triomphe injured a further 17, while an unexploded bomb was found at the weekend by a high-speed train line north of Lyon.

Chief suspect is the radical Algerian opposition Armed Islamic Group (GIA), which is fighting a bloody civil war with the military-backed Algiers government.

Mr. Juppe denied that France supported the Algerian military and said he wanted to see "a democratic and stable Algeria."

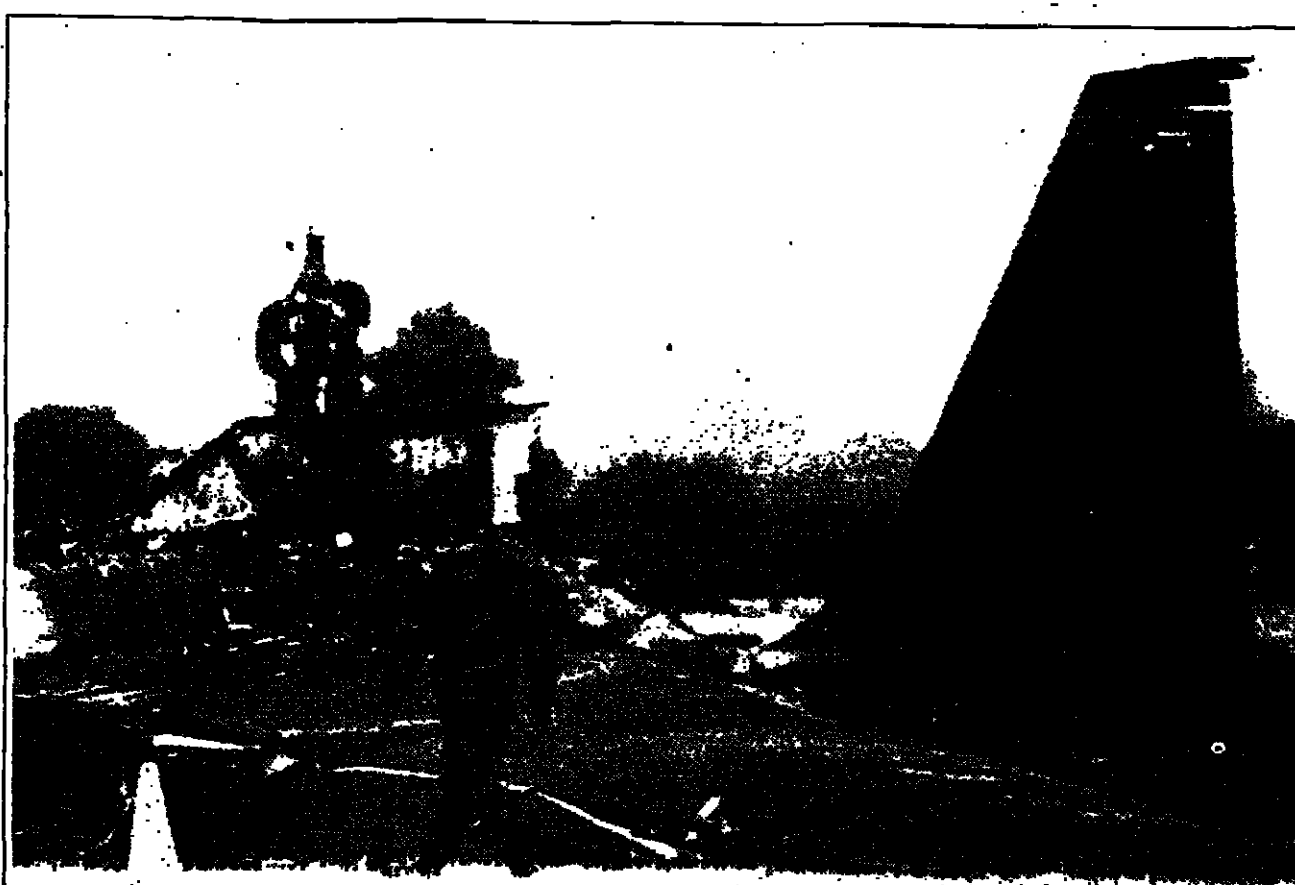
"What happens in Algeria is the affair of the Algerians. We have no business interfering in Algeria," he said, adding, "We will not allow bases for terrorism to develop in France."

Paris on Tuesday formally requested the extradition from Sweden of Algerian activist Abdul Karim Deneche, 40, considered close to the GIA and a top suspect in the July 25 train bombing.

Mr. Juppe said he hoped that Sweden would show solidarity and agree to extradite Deneche. "We have a joint fight against terrorism," he said.

Sweden has said there was not enough evidence against Deneche as he seemed to have an alibi. But Swedish chief public prosecutor Jan Danielsson said Tuesday that the suspicions surrounding him "have still not been fully cleared up."

An extradition request by France would take precedence over expulsion if it conformed to Swedish law, officials said.



CRASH: American firecrews at the wreckage of a U2 spy plane that crashed at take-off on Tuesday at the former U.S. Air Force base at Fairford in Western England. The pilot of the plane, which was believed to have been taking off on a mission to Bosnia, was killed (AFP photo)

Hariri denies resignation threat

BEIRUT (R) — Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Al Hariri denied on Wednesday a newspaper report that he was about to resign over a new disputed with Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri, his main political rival.

"This news is absolutely not true and the cabinet will meet as normal. There is no need for any abnormal step to be taken," Mr. Hariri told reporters after the leftist Beirut newspaper Al Safir quoted sources close to him as saying he was threatening to resign.

The Bank of Lebanon, apparently fearing a run on the Lebanese pound as the dispute emerged, raised its repurchase agreement rate to 50 per cent from 30 per cent.

An official said the bank was reacting routinely to an increased demand on the Beirut market for dollars — the safe haven currency for Lebanese in times of political disturbance.

Al Safir said Mr. Berri

was angered by Mr. Hariri's proposal to approve a government decree at Wednesday's weekly cabinet meeting allowing private Lebanese television stations to broadcast abroad by satellite.

Mr. Berri believed this would usurp parliament's legislative rights and he ordered his cabinet supporters to resign if Mr. Hariri went ahead, the newspaper added.

It said sources close to Mr. Hariri quoted the billionaire prime minister as saying, "Not allowing this (satellite broadcasting) project to go through means I am not being allowed to carry out my role as prime minister and in such a case I would prefer to resign."

Mr. Hariri has resigned or threatened to resign three times since becoming prime minister in October 1992, with the task of rebuilding Lebanon from the ruins of the 1975-90 civil war.

Each time he has com-



Rafiq Al Hariri

plained of politicians and former warlords blocking his projects and he has progressively pin-pointed Mr. Berri as the chief obstacle.

Each crisis has caused an increasingly heavy run on the Lebanese currency.

The Bank of Lebanon spent more than \$400 million in May during three weeks of heavy pressure on the pound as confidence declined before Mr.

Hariri stepped down and returned within two days with a strengthened cabinet.

The bank has lost about \$1 billion of its reserves this year in defending the pound, reducing them to some \$1.6 billion.

According to Al Safir, sources close to Mr. Berri accused Mr. Hariri of "trying to take control over the destiny and interests of the country."

Under the Taif accord of 1989, which ended the civil war, Lebanon is ruled by a triumvirate of President Elias Hrawi, a Maronite Christian, Mr. Hariri, a Sunni Muslim and Mr. Berri, a Shi'ite Muslim.

Relations between the three have grown increasingly uneasy as presidential elections due in November approach and most political disputes are seen as part of the battle for the presidency.

Mr. Hariri wants an extension of Mr. Hrawi's term but Mr. Berri seeks a new incumbent.

Guerrillas rocket Israeli position in S. Lebanon

RASHAYA (Agencies) — Lebanese guerrillas on Wednesday fired a salvo of Katyusha rockets on an Israeli position in South Lebanon, injuring two civilians, security sources reported.

A man and a boy were wounded in the attack on Jabal Al Rihan, a position the Israelis jointly man with their militia allies in their self-declared "security zone," the sources said.

The Voice of the South, a radio station run by the Israeli-sponsored South Lebanon Army (SLA), said 12 rockets fell before dawn near the position. Earlier, security sources counted nine rockets.

It was not immediately clear how the attack on a military post harmed civilians.

The sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the attack appeared to be the work of Hizbollah guerrillas. The group did not immediately comment.

The SLA has positions on the outskirts of Jabal Al Rihan and Israeli troops frequently carry out patrols in the area.

Police in South Lebanon said the rockets were fired from the western sector of the Bekaa Valley, where Palestinian guerrillas and fighters from Hizbollah are deployed.

Hizbollah carried out a string of anti-Israeli operations on Tuesday, claiming to have killed an Israeli soldier in sniper fire. The SLA denied there were casualties.

The Lebanese army dismantled a Katyusha rocket launcher on the outskirts of the town of Nabatiyeh in South Lebanon on Tuesday. The rockets were aimed at the zone.

Five members of Hizbollah have been killed in Israeli air raids since August 25 and two others were wounded.

An Israeli soldier was also wounded since Friday, an SLA militiaman was killed and another wounded and a civilian was also hurt.

In apparent retaliation for Wednesday's attack, Israeli gunners opened up with more than two dozen shells on suspected guerrilla hideouts in hills above the zone's eastern flank, the sources said.

Israeli troops also shelled Hizbollah bases to the west in

Iqlim Al Tufah with heavy tanks and cannon fire. No casualties were reported.

Wednesday's casualties raised the overall toll in South Lebanon, the last active Arab-Israeli warfront, to 129 people killed and 292 wounded.

Also Wednesday, a shepherd was killed from rocket shrapnel in a field near a Hizbollah training camp in the Bekaa Valley.

Police in the nearby city of Baalbek confirmed that Hassan Msheikh, 35, was killed but did not disclose cause of death.

Relatives and witnesses said Msheikh was cut down by flying shrapnel from a rocket-propelled grenade by guerrillas during training at Ain Jdeideh, about 25 kilometres west of Baalbek.

Woman, five children killed in Algeria blast

ALGIERS (AFP) — A bomb attack on a municipal leader's home in western Algeria killed five people, including his pregnant wife, another woman and three children, the daily newspaper Liberte reported Wednesday.

An armed group first tried to target the guarded house of the chairman of the District Executive Committee (DEC), which replaced municipal councils, in Oued Fodda, near Chlef, according to Liberte.

Faced with the resistance of communal guards, the armed group placed a bomb in a neighbouring house then fled, the newspaper said.

The blast killed the eight-months pregnant wife of the DEC chairman, the two children of a guard, a neighbour and her son, the newspaper said.

According to the newspaper, an armed group killed a further two people in Harouch, near Oued Fodda. It blamed the increase in

attacks by armed groups on increased action by security forces, saying three "dangerous terrorists" were killed a week ago.

Observers said bomb attacks against homes seemed to be a new strategy by armed groups.

In particular, attacks against families of former fighters in the Algerian war of independence and communal guards have increased.

The daily Al Khabar said Tuesday a former independence fighter was killed, together with members of his family, by a bomb in his home in Zemouri on the eastern coast of Algeria.

An army operation in the mountainous region of Kabylie killed seven armed fundamentalists, according to Liberte Wednesday.

Several mountainous areas were affected by the operation carried out following numerous attacks and sabotage of infrastructure, the newspaper reported.

Defence rests in trial of Abdul Rahman, 9 others

NEW YORK (AFP) — Attorneys defending 10 people accused of waging a bloody campaign against New York rested their case eight months into the trial.

The lawyers for Egyptian cleric Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman and nine others concluded testimony Wednesday, allowing the prosecution to begin what was expected to be several days of rebuttal testimony.

Federal Judge Michael Mukasey said meanwhile he would sequester the jury to avoid outside influence or distraction during deliberations, expected in mid-September. Panel members will be housed in a New York hotel.

Sheikh Abdul Rahman, a 57-year-old blind cleric who allegedly heads a fundamentalist Islamic movement, is on trial with the nine others on charges of plotting to blow up New York landmarks, including the World Trade Centre and United Nations headquarters in

an effort to pressure Washington on Middle East policy.

Four men allegedly linked to the Sheikh were sentenced to life in jail in connection with the Feb. 26, 1993 World Trade Centre bombing, which killed six people and injured more than 1,000.

In seeking a conspiracy conviction using a rarely used law passed during the civil war, the government is not required to show that the defendants committed acts of terrorism, but engaged in a seditious conspiracy.

The defence has argued that Sheikh Abdul Rahman was merely exercising his right to free speech as a religious leader.

"The entire defence case has humanised the defendants, who before had been demonised by pretrial publicity and by the government," said Lynne Stewart, Sheikh Abdul Rahman's chief lawyer, who noted "his own case has presented him as the man of God he truly is."

Geagea faces new charge

BEIRUT (Agencies) — A Beirut investigative judge on Wednesday charged former Christian warlord Samir Geagea with ordering a failed 1991 attempt to assassinate a government minister, judicial sources said.

Dr. Geagea, head of the Lebanese Forces civil war militia, is serving a life sentence for murdering a political rival and his family in 1990 and is on trial for killing 11 people by blowing up a church in 1994.

Judge George Ghantous on Wednesday issued an arrest warrant against Dr. Geagea accusing him of masterminding the attack.

The accusation carries a possible death sentence.

The sources said Dr. Geagea will be questioned on links to the 1991 attempt to kill the then defence minister, Michel Al Murr, by a car bomb that targeted his motorcade. Eight people were killed in the blast and Mr. Murr was slightly wounded.

Earlier this month, the judge ordered the arrest of four other former Lebanese Forces members for involvement in the car bombing. Only one of the suspects is in custody.

Dr. Geagea, arrested in April 1991, was convicted last June of murdering his Christian rival Dany Chamoun, his wife and two sons, and was sentenced to life imprisonment. No date has been set for the resumption of his trial in the church bombing case.

A Maronite Christian, Dr. Geagea has also been accused of involvement in the murder of rival LF official Elias Zayek shot to death in 1989.

Khartoum ready for dialogue with Mahdi

KHARTOUM (Agencies) — Sudan on Wednesday said it was willing to open talks with opposition groups, including former Prime Minister Sadeq Al Mahdi, who was released from prison this week.

Justice Minister Abdul Aziz Shiddo told the daily Akhbar Al Yom that the government "welcomes a dialogue with any opponents committed to ethical opposition and to serving Sudan, whether Mahdi or anyone else."

However, "the current opposition seeks to undermine the country and create conflict among the people," Mr. Shiddo said.

On Saturday, Dr. Mahdi left prison more than three months after his arrest in a general amnesty for political prisoners that set free 32 opposition party members.

Ali Al Haj Mohammad, minister in the federal government chamber, also underlined the government's willingness to meet the opposition, Akhbar Al Yom reported.

"If Mahdi wants peaceful dialogue, the government is ready, provided the dialogue is effective and based on principles the government has drawn up to establish the system of rule," Mr. Mohammad said.

The minister said Khartoum had drawn up solutions for Sudan's economic problems and for the 12-year civil war in the south.

President Omar Bashir, meanwhile, ordered the release of 18 more men under the amnesty he declared last week for political prisoners.

It raised to at least 50 the number of people who have been freed from Sudanese jails.

Mr. Shiddo told the official Sudan News Agency that all in the latest group had been tried for anti-government activities. The government earlier had said the amnesty would not apply to anyone convicted of a crime by a court.

"The amnesty covers a number of persons convicted of involvement in the coup attempt in 1991 and those convicted in the 1994 explosives case," Mr. Shiddo was quoted as saying.

He did give the names of those released. But among those jailed in the alleged coup plot was Abdullah Nig-

dalla, who was religious affairs minister in the government of Dr. Mahdi, whose cabinet was overthrown in a coup by Lieutenant General Bashir in 1989. Gen. Bashir then installed an Islamic regime.

The 1994 case involved Sudanese who were arrested before carrying out an alleged plot to blow up government installations in eastern Sudan and the capital, Khartoum.

The government announced on Aug. 23 that it would free all political detainees. Releases began the following day.

The decision came after the government reorganised its security apparatus and said it did not feel threatened by opposition forces.

It urged that the action be regarded as part of an effort to unite the country and as a sign that Sudan respects human rights.

The group had been strongly criticised by international rights groups for the jailing of Al Mahdi and other political prisoners.

No exact figures are available on the number of political detainees in Sudan, but Western human rights groups say they could number several hundred, including many held without charge or trial.

Sudan has released three Egyptians held for 40 days in a Khartoum prison, the Egyptian news agency MENA reported.

Their release Tuesday means that only one prisoner is left out of eight Egyptian employees of a cement company in the Sudanese capital arrested on July 8. Four of them were released and returned to Egypt on July 13.

The last remaining prisoner's name is Barsam Nassif, MENA reported.

"Sudanese officials gave Egypt no explanation for their arrest or their release," MENA said.

Cairo has said the arrests were part of a "campaign of provocation conducted by Sudanese officials" against Egyptian nationals.

Relations between Cairo and Khartoum were thrown into crisis after Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak accused Sudan of backing an assassination attempt against him on June 26 in Addis Ababa.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Turkey: Two killed making bombs

ISTANBUL (AFP) — Two suspected Kurdish separatists were killed while preparing time-bombs in a downtown hideout two days after explosions killed a Jordanian tourist and a Turkish national, Anatolia news agency said Wednesday. The semi-official agency said a woman was also arrested after the bomb blew up late Tuesday. The incident came on the heels of a spate of explosions Sunday in busy Istanbul areas that killed two people and wounded 40. At least three more time-bombs were found Monday and defused in a shopping mall garage. The separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) claimed responsibility for the attacks. In Tuesday's incident, police defused another time-bomb in the hideout, and found quantities of explosive material. The two dead men and the woman were identified as belonging to the same family. The Anatolian described them as "separatist terrorists," a term generally reserved for the PKK, which has been fighting the government for independence in southeastern Turkey.

Foreigners held in Somaliland freed

NAIROBI (R) — A Swedish diplomat, two Kenyan guards, an Italian pilot and French co-pilot held in breakaway Somaliland for a week have been released and flown to the Kenyan capital, witnesses said. The five landed in Nairobi on Tuesday night on a chartered plane from Hargeisa via the nearby Red Sea state of Djibouti. Swedish diplomat Mikael Glas told reporters it felt great to be back after their embassies contacted Mohammad Ibrahim Egal, the president of Somaliland, and cleared up misunderstandings that caused them to be detained on landing at Hargeisa airport. Mr. Glas said the five appeared in court in Hargeisa and dates were set for another appearance before they were released. But they were very well treated during detention at a police station since Aug. 21, he said.

Iran: U.S. seeks to plunder Arab wealth

NICOSIA (AP) — A senior Iranian official blasted the latest U.S. military buildup in the Gulf region, saying Washington was robbing Arab states of billions of dollars under the pretext of offering them protection. Mohammad Javad Larjani, deputy chairman of the foreign policy commission in Iran's parliament, called the buildup in response to recent instability in Iraq "very suspicious." The United States has deployed warships and thousands of extra troops to the area since the Aug. 8 defection to Jordan of a senior member of Saddam Hussein's inner circle. It has held joint exercises with Jordan and brought forward scheduled war games with Kuwait. "The Americans have come to the region to the name of protecting certain Arab states," Mr. Larjani said. "But, as a matter of fact they are here to plunder Arab states of tens of billions of dollars and interfere in their political structure."

2 killed by militants in Minya hold-up

MINYA (AFP) — Two Christians were killed and a policeman injured on Wednesday when armed Muslim militants held up a jewellery store in the southern Egypt province of Minya, police said. The attackers, members of the Gamaa Islamiyah group, burst into the shop in Maghagha village, 185 kilometres south of Cairo, and sprayed it with automatic weapons fire. The shop owner, Fahmi Tadris Al Ashimi, and his son Nadir were killed in the gunfire.

COLUMN

Architect, son held as raid yields millions

NEW DELHI (AP) — The government's chief architect in New Delhi and his son were arrested after police raided their house and recovered millions of rupees they believe were ill-gotten, a news agency reported. Ramesh Sabharwal and his son, Puneet, were being detained in jail pending trial after the Central Bureau of Investigation, India's federal police, arrested them on charges of owning illegal assets. United News of India news agency said. Police said last week's raid at the house of Mr. Sabharwal, the officiating chief architect of the New Delhi Municipal Council, yielded cash, fixed deposit certificates, jewelry and other goods worth 400 million rupees (\$13 million). Senior government officials earn about 10,000 rupees (\$300) a month besides free or subsidised housing, cars and generous benefits.

China's cops put bite on official eating, drinking

BEIJING (AP) — China's corruption watchdogs are keeping the bite on officials' dining, drinking and dancing in public, the Communist Party newspaper People's Daily reported. The party ordered officials earlier this year not to attend any banquets that could be seen as influencing their work nor to use public funds to go to music and dance halls and other entertainment facilities. Public anger over the lavish living of some officials and the misuse of public funds prompted the party to mount the two-year-old anti-corruption drive. The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection, the party's internal anti-corruption agency, warned that any violations of the restrictions during the rest of the year would be dealt with harshly. People's Daily reported. On July 12, the commission and its government counterpart, the Ministry of Procuratorate, sent 11 inspection teams to party and government organisations, the newspaper said.

Japanese bullfighter in serious condition

SEVILLE, Spain (AFP) — Japanese bullfighter Atsuhiko Shimoyama was still in a serious condition Tuesday after being gored by a young bull earlier this month, informed sources said Tuesday. They said he has left the intensive care unit of a Seville hospital, but was still in a serious condition. His American manager, John Fulton, said the 24-year-old bullfighter was in good spirits thanks to visits from family and friends. The "Child of the Rising Sun" is still partially paralysed and is unlikely to return to the ring soon. Shimoyama, the first and only Japanese bullfighter in history, was admitted to hospital on Aug. 18 in a semi-comatose state, after being gored in the jaw during a bullfight at Pedro Bernardo in Avila province. Doctors initially detected a hemorrhage and feared brain damage. The son of a Tokyo restaurant owner, Shimoyama decided to become a bullfighter after seeing a 1949 film called Bloody Arenas starring Tyrone Power, Anthony Quinn and Rita Hayworth.

Russian accused of killing 26 people arrested

MOSCOW (AP) — Police in the former Soviet Republic of Tajikistan arrested a Russian man accused of killing 26 people since 1977, a newspaper reported Monday. Mikhail Novoselov fled to Tajikistan to evade Russian law enforcement authorities who were seeking him on charges of murdering 22 people, the Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper said. While in Tajikistan, Novoselov had killed four more people over the past six months, the newspaper said, quoting the Tajik Interior Ministry. The report said he confessed during the investigation. Mr. Novoselov was caught while trying to sell a rifle in Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan, where he had been working in a psychiatric hospital. He was carrying three passports with different names.